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The Dramatic Writings of Hugh Henry Brackenridge

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THE DRAMATIC WRITINGS OF HUGH HENRY BRACKENRIDGE

by

Virginia A. Hajek

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School
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The Dramatic Writings of Hugh Henry Brackenridge

Virginia A. Hajek, PH.D.
Loyola University, Chicago, 1971

Chairman: Dr. Thomas Gorman

Although Hugh Henry Brackenridge is known today for his episodic novel Modern Chivalry, he has written dramatic pieces: commencement poems, The Rising Glory of America and A Poem on Divine Revelation; and dramas, The Battle of Bunkers-Hill and The Death of General Montgomery. This study examines those writings and evaluates Brackenridge's contribution to the history of American drama during the Revolutionary period.

Brackenridge's dramatic potential can be traced from his presentation of a trialogue at the College of New Jersey (Princeton) commencement in 1771, The Rising Glory of America, a poem co-authored with Philip Freneau. Brackenridge presents the prologue containing the thematic statement developed throughout. His epilogue compresses the hopes and visions of the participants in a triumphant assertion of the future glory of America. Although digressing at times from the major themes, Brackenridge develops the commerce, agriculture, and literature themes in an emphatic assertion of the potential greatness of a future America. His potential for characterization is revealed in his defining of three different personalities. Although the characters use the same diction, Brackenridge provides most of the speeches of transition, pointing the way to his capacity for stage dialogue later. His second commencement offering, A Poem on Divine Revelation, 1774, develops the argument of conservative colonials to whom acts of defiance were particularly abhorrent. This offering displays Brackenridge's concern for reasoned persuasion to a religiously oriented point of view, a concern emphasized in his thematic reiteration of the Divine Assistance motif of his first drama.

In 1776 Brackenridge published The Battle of Bunkers-Hill, which celebrated the united colonial strength that made the battle inspirational as well as militarily memorable. Brackenridge emphasizes theme and action in a balance of rhetoric and parallel scenes which present the many facets of the struggle. The contrasts of the ideologies and the attitudes of the British and colonial leaders demonstrates the author's growing skill in sustaining tension. Although characterization is not the dramatist's prime concern, his selection of personalities to depict shows an awareness of dramatic possibilities. Brackenridge's utilization of certain devices in diction further reinforces his characterizations and themes. In his presentation of the battle, Brackenridge extends the incredible feats of the local

militias to the credit of the American forces. The event assumes national significance, canonizing the first American martyr and rallying support for the colonial cause. Brackenridge's selection of incidents to be dramatized, his parallel scenes, characterization, and appropriate diction reveal his emerging skill as a dramatist.

Brackenridge's dramatic instinct led him to honor the hero of the ill-fated Canadian campaign by dramatizing his death in the drama, *The Death of General Montgomery*, published in 1777. This drama illustrates his skill in developing a theme through character development supported by action. Clustered around the two leaders of the armies, Montgomery and Arnold, is a variety of figures who demonstrate different aspects of the colonial spirit. Further defining his diverse personalities, the author employs appropriate diction. Since the disaster at Quebec did not lend itself to the use of parallel scenes, Brackenridge structured his play to illustrate the honor of dying for one's country as opposed to senseless sacrifice. The play is superior to the earlier effort in its brisk action, characterization, authentic diction, and demonstration of theme rather than reiteration of lofty sentiments.

This study concludes with a brief review of the state of the drama in Revolutionary times. Since performing drama had been curtailed by the Continental Congress, published or closet drama was the logical vehicle for continuing the dramatic tradition. The works of other dramatists of the period are briefly summarized and evaluated to compare their subject matter and approach with Brackenridge's: the formal satire of Mercy Otis Warren's *The Adulateur*, 1773, and *The Group*, 1775; the broad farce of the anonymous *The Blockheads*, 1776; the chronicle play of John Leacock, *The Fall of British Tyranny*, 1776, which contains some satirical and farcical elements, and *The Patriots*, 1776 (?) included in the works of Colonel Robert Munford published in 1798. So topical was their matter that except for Leacock's offering, the plays could have had little better than regional appeal. Today, the plays have little appeal, for even the chronicle play requires a thorough indoctrination in both American and British history for a full appreciation.

Hugh Henry Brackenridge took the historic approach and dramatized two events of the early struggle. His plays were of universal appeal because they fell within the ken of a united fighting colonial America. Because they deal with the moral victory that was Bunkers Hill and the noble death of General Montgomery, they can be understood and appreciated today. By investing his dramas with the contemporary relevance of current themes and national heroes, Brackenridge contributed to the survival of drama during the Revolution. By selecting episodes with dramatic potential, welding them into cohesive structures within which characters and action developed, he produced plays of artistic merit that place him as one of the more capable dramatic writers during this difficult period.

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Introduction

Although Hugh Henry Brackenridge is remembered today primarily for his novel Modern Chivalry, his dramatic writings are among the more effective chauvinistic excursions produced during the Revolutionary Period. Still the merit of his dramas have received some recognition. To Moses Coit Tyler they had "a literary merit so positive and so remarkable as to justify our study of them even on that account alone."¹ A more recent evaluation finds the verse "flexible and dignified" and pronounces that "Brackenridge's dramas are better than the other revolutionary plays from the point of structure and expression even if they have not the vigor of action."²

Despite these guideposts to two highlights in the history of the infant American drama, there is no full length study of Brackenridge's plays. There are no critical articles in scholarly journals which analyze this writer's

¹Moses Coit Tyler, Literary History of the American Revolution, II (New York, 1897), p. 210.

²Arthur Hobson Quinn, A History of the American Drama from the Beginning to the Civil War (2d ed.; New York, 1951), p. 53.

dramatic writings, either his dramas or his commencement odes. The plays are noted rather than discussed in Arthur Hobson Quinn's survey of the field.³ The standard work on Brackenridge is primarily a biographical study by Claude Milton Newlin, which treats each of the subject's dramatic works in less than two pages.⁴ There is no attempt to evaluate Brackenridge's dramatic writings. The most recent book on this colonial figure also gives the plays but brief mention.⁵ The criticism is more general than germane, incorporating for the most part previously written information about the plays.

This study is an analysis and evaluation of the dramatic writings of the colonial writer, Hugh Henry Brackenridge. The procedure followed is a chronological consideration of his dramatic writings: the commencement odes, The Rising Glory of America and A Poem on Divine Revelation and his school plays The Battle of Bunkers-Hill and The Death of General Montgomery. The Criterion for inclusion of a piece has been its appearance in dramatic form

³Ibid., pp. 50-53.

⁴Claude Milton Newlin, The Life and Writings of Hugh Henry Brackenridge (Princeton, 1932).

⁵Daniel Marder, Hugh Henry Brackenridge (New York, 1967).

or its presentation before an audience rather than a congregation. The examination of each work commences with a historical introduction dealing with the occasion and circumstances of the entertainment. Because of the relative obscurity of these writings and because of their rarity, a plot summary of each work has been given before focusing on structure, character, diction, and theme. Explication of periodic references, difficult allusions and the like have been included where necessary. The work has then been evaluated for its contemporary relevance, its demonstration of the author's growing dramatic sophistication, and its dramatic work as colonial drama.

However, before one can understand and appreciate the works of Brackenridge, it is essential that one be familiar with the early life of the dramatist and know the general background of colonial drama as this information provides the clue for the direction of his talents into school plays rather than theatrical performance.

Hugh Henry Brackenridge was born in Scotland, the land which had curbed the drama by ecclesiastical and governmental censure from the Reformation until quite late in the eighteenth century. The north Britons, who considered the theater Satanic, curtailed drama in their country to the extent that no national drama has ever flourished.⁶ Because

⁶Terence Tobin, "The Beginnings of Drama in Scotland," Theatre Survey, VIII (May, 1967), 1-16.

this negativistic attitude toward the stage existed for three hundred years, the Scottish immigrants had a heritage of hatred of the theater, which many transported to the New World. Despite the suppression of the theater in Scotland, or perhaps because of it, Scots made contributions to drama in colonial America. The first known professional performance in the New World was given by Anthony Aston, who became the Edinburgh Theatre manager,⁷ and the first play published in America is ascribed to Robert Hunter, New York's most popular royal governor, who was born in Scotland.⁸

Hunter's Androboros, 17 [14], a farcical extermination of political skulldugery, established a precedent for light drama which dealt with contemporary political events. The only known copy of Androboros contains a key in manuscript which identifies forgotten political figures. There is no record of Hunter's three act effort ever having been performed, which inaugurates the scholarly conundrum of justifying considerations of closet plays in a treatment of dramas written during the colonial period.

Although British dramas were staged in cultural centers such as Williamsburg and Philadelphia during the 1730's, it was not until 1767 that a native born American, Thomas

⁷James C. Dibdin, The Annals of the Edinburgh Stage (Edinburgh, 1888), pp. 35, 37-39. "Aston, Anthony," DNE, II (1921), 208.

⁸"Hunter, Robert," DAB, XXVIII (1943), 401.

Godfrey, wrote a play which premiered in his native land. Godfrey's The Prince of Parthia was the first known American play produced professionally, but it is not unlikely that American dramatic attempts were given by amateurs before the latter half of the eighteenth century. Because of the dearth of records, it is impossible to establish absolute theatrical firsts in colonial America.

The meager accounts of plays performed in the American colonies, which stems in part from the low regard in which the stage was held, parallels the retarded theatrical development of Brackenridge's homeland. The boy who became one of America's early effective dramatic polemicists was born in Kintyre in 1748, three years after the Jacobite Rebellion. Scotland was in a desperate condition after the "45," and when Brackenridge was five years old, his parents packed their few possessions and emigrated to the New World in search of a better existence. The family was impoverished by the time they reached York County, Pennsylvania, and eked out a life quite similar to the one they had known in Scotland in the pioneer community called "the Barrens." Although Brackenridge's biographer asserts the Barrens was as unproductive as the Campbellstown region the Brackenridges had left,⁹ the area possessed arid, gravelly, and loamy

⁹Newlin, p. 2.

soil which is capable of great productivity.¹⁰

The Barrens was a Scotch-Irish community which was clannish. In this Knox-oriented atmosphere Brackenridge spent his formative years. The Tartan influence manifested itself in his adult writing. Duncan in Modern Chivalry speaks with a Scots burr. In his newspaper, Tree of Liberty,¹¹ Brackenridge published dialectical verse redolent of Burns' rural humanism:

When of an age to ca' the pleugh,
My father used to say "Gae Huoch,
And louse the horses frae the tether,
It's time to yoke." Without a swither,

¹⁰Wayland F. Dunaway, The Scotch-Irish of Colonial Pennsylvania (London, 1962), p. 57.

I. D. Rupp, History of Lancaster and York Counties, Pennsylvania (Lancaster, 1844), p. 567, explains the word which has led other writers astray: "The term Barrens has not been applied to this portion of the country from the sterility of the soil; but from the circumstance that the Indians for many years and until 1730 or 1731, to improve this portion of their Great Park for the purpose of hunting, fired the copse or bushes as oft as their convenience seemed to call for it; and thus when the whites commenced settling here, they found no timber, hence they applied the term Barrens, a common appellation at that time to such portions of country, however fertile the soil."

¹¹Cf. "To the Scots-Irishman," Tree of Liberty, Feb. 14, 1801. The strength of the Scots tradition manifests itself in Brackenridge's naming this politically oriented newspaper. He chose the Jacobites' mark of identification. "Honored and blest be the evergreen pine," the line from the old Stewart supporters' song, "Hail to the Chief," indicates the reverence associated with this symbol of independence.

I bided biding, but mayhap,
 Just leke a man that's ta'en a cap,
 I doiter'd, minding what I saw,
 More than the orders; ah, fou' fau'.¹²

It is interesting to note that broad Scots dialect such as Burns employs in "Tam O'Shanter" and which Brackenridge later acclimates to reproduce the immigrant Scots burr had become a medium for folkloric verse of strictly comic dimensions. Kurt Wittig observes that late eighteenth-century dialectical poetry seems to be a travesty of the maker.¹³ It is ironic that the expression of nationalism, and in Brackenridge's case a sentimental remembrance of a tradition, should have been relegated to a provincial humor, even among those whose natural mode of expression it was. Since Brackenridge did not write any comedies, he used no Scotticisms of dialect in his plays.

The tradition of sacrificing heavily for education among the Scots who spoke in the unacceptable dialect was strong. The University of Edinburgh declared two holidays a year in the late sixteenth century, which are still kept, to enable those students too poor to buy food to return to their homes in the country to bring back grain. Although there were no "Meal-Mondays" in Pennsylvania, the elder Brackenridge did manage to feed his son and send him to

¹²Tree of Liberty, June 20, 1801.

¹³Kurt Wittig, The Scottish Tradition in Literature (Edinburgh, 1958), pp. 202-205, et seq.

school despite the many chores which usually fell to sons of immigrant farmers. William Brackenridge¹⁴ sent his son to the Slate Ridge School where a Presbyterian divine gave the lad a rigorous grounding in the classics.¹⁵ Because their son was apt in Greek and Latin, his parents were convinced that he had a vocation to the ministry. His mother, upon whom he doted, had the calling more than her son, but the boy who was not fond of grueling farm labor was sufficiently opportunistic to realize that the only way he could further his education was by studying for the cloth.

Henry Marie Brackenridge mentions that his father traveled thirty miles to borrow books from Fagg's Manor Classical School,¹⁶ but there is no record which indicates that Brackenridge attended this outstanding Presbyterian preparatory school. It is likely was tutored at intervals by the distinguished Reverend John Blair who conducted Fagg's Manor from 1757 to 1767.¹⁷

Although little is known about Brackenridge's

¹⁴The family name was Brackenridge. Hugh Montgomery Breckenridge changed the spelling of the surname to Brackenridge. Cf. "Fragments" in Modern Chivalry (New York, 1962), p. 758. In 1781 he changed Montgomery to Henry, Marder, pp. 23-24.

¹⁵Henry Marie Brackenridge, "Biographical Notice of H. H. Brackenridge, Late of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania," Southern Literary Messenger, VIII (Jan., 1842), 152. All further citations of this seminal profile will be abbreviated B.N.

¹⁶B.N., p. 152.

¹⁷Dunaway, pp. 204, 221.

association with the school, since he had expressed his desire to study for the ministry, it is certain that he received additional classical training which would later manifest itself in his frequent allusions to Greek and Roman mythology.¹⁸ During his association with Fagg's Manor he mastered elementary subjects sufficiently to enable him to obtain his first position.

When he was fifteen, Brackenridge applied for a teaching post at the free school in Gunpowder Falls, Maryland. Despite his extreme youth, the trustees accepted his application, and the adolescent taught obstreperous contemporaries with apparent success.¹⁹ In 1768 after five years of this experience, "he had exhausted the sources of learning near him; and his thirst for knowledge urged him to seek more copious streams."²⁰ The elementary school teacher then applied to the newly-arrived president of the College of New Jersey (Princeton), and was admitted to the seminary confines. Dr. John Witherspoon, who had come from Scotland,²¹ presided over a rigidly disciplined school which offered its

¹⁸Carl Holliday, The Wit and Humor of Colonial Days 1607-1800 (Philadelphia, 1912), p. 274, says that Brackenridge learned Greek and Latin from a circuit riding parson. This unsubstantiated assertion is probably incorrect.

¹⁹Newlin, pp. 6-7.

²⁰B.N., P. 153.

²¹Cf. L. H. Butterfield, John Witherspoon Comes to America (Princeton, 1953).

students a narrow quadrivium.²²

During his three years at Princeton, Brackenridge concentrated his efforts on oratory, for although he had professed a desire to enter the ministry, he was more enamored of the legal profession.²³ He also wrote for the Whig Society, one of the literary clubs.²⁴ His known contribution as a member of this organization, which included Philip Freneau, James Madison, and William Bradford in its ranks, are satiric poems in the Pope tradition. These efforts are more juvenile than Juvenalian, but indicate the student's penchant for a near conversational approach, which points the way to dramatic capacity:

I will declare, for all must know it
I long have strove to be a poet.

²²John Maclean, History of the College of New Jersey from Its Origin to the Commencement of 1854 (Philadelphia, 1877), I, 362.

²³B.N., pp. 152-153.

²⁴Fred Lewis Pattee (ed.), Poems of Philip Freneau, I (Princeton, 1902), xvi-xvii, is incorrect in his assessment of the purposes for which the Whig Society was founded. Newlin, pp. 10-14, and Marder, p. 26, are also inaccurate in their estimation of Brackenridge's place in this group. Jacob M. Beam, The American Whig Society of Princeton University (Princeton, 1933), pp. 1-37, gives the most complete account of the club which was established primarily as a literary society. Since the term "Whig" was first used by William Livingston in 1768 to denote a Scots Presbyterian, the name of this society, which Brackenridge founded, meant dissenting American Presbyterian rather than political liberal. It is more correct to attribute the political cast which some of the club members' satires exhibit to the spirit of the times rather than to the aegis under which the Whig Society was founded.

Besides this sin, alas, God knows,
 I've wrote some dirty things in prose.
 Yes, I remember, 'twas in Boston
 I put some tawdry rhimes a post-on
 About the Stamp Act they were written,
 How we were by Europeans bitten.
 I thought by this means to have glory
 In annals of immortal story.²⁵

The thirteen poems which Brackenridge is known to have written in answer to the squibs of the *Clivosophic Society*,²⁶ possess the youthful verve of the Connecticut Wits whose efforts appeared shortly after Brackenridge and his circle supported Whiggery by ridiculing their Tory contemporaries.

In 1770 Brackenridge collaborated with Freneau on a prose odyssey entitled "Father Bombo's Pilgrimage to Mecca, etc." Newlin prints the extant manuscript fragment which he labels "the earliest example of American prose fiction."²⁷ The fragment which contains much dialogue, chiefly in stage

²⁵"Spring's Confession to Will McCorkle, a Popish Priest," #7, "Satires against the Tories," M.S. Am 0336, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, p. 34. Newlin, pp. 11-14, cites a number of Brackenridge's verses from his literary club days.

Beam, pp. 43-57, explicates the nineteen satires in this series which formed the Whig side of the Paper War of 1771. Brackenridge wrote Satires 1-10, 14-16, all of which show more propriety than the "obscene denunciations of Freneau and Madison."

Newlin, pp. 52-54, is incorrect in his estimation that Brackenridge wrote only the first ten verses.

²⁶Cf. Charles Richard Williams, The Clivosophic Society (Princeton, 1916).

²⁷Newlin, pp. 15-21.

Irish dialect, is worth noting for its short if not crisp speeches which are dramatic rather than novelesque in concept. The comic flair which Brackenridge realized in Modern Chivalry is evidenced in "Father Bombo." The humor operates on the premise of exaggeration rather than incongruity. That the mirth Brackenridge exhibits in his early writings never found its way into his plays may be attributed to the utilitarian purposes for which he wrote his dramas. The occasions for which Brackenridge wrote entertainments did not lend themselves to comic treatment or even humorous insertions.

Even in 1771, the year of his graduation, national events had cast their shadows over the light-hearted efforts of these college youths. Not until the sister colonies had welded themselves into a federal republic after bitter internecine strife was Hugh Henry Brackenridge to employ his pen in the satiric or comic vein. His first publication and later efforts during the war years were dedicated to serving the national effort in dramatic pieces that not only continued the dramatic tradition in the colonies but also supported the cause through their utilitarian and polemic aspects.

CHAPTER ONE

COMMENCEMENT POEMS

Brackenridge collaborated with his friend, Freneau, on their first dramatic effort, A Poem on the Rising Glory of America, which Brackenridge delivered at his commencement, September 25, 1771. He declaimed this dramatic poem after delivering De societate hominum, the Latin oration expected of the class salutatorian. The inclusion of a dramatic poem in graduation exercise would not have been considered innovative by Dr. Witherspoon, for despite kirk censorship, school plays had persisted in Scotland as entertainments at visitation and ends of term even during the troublous seventeenth century when all other types of entertainment were excoriated.¹

The founders of Princeton had built a stage in Nassau Hall when the building was constructed, but stipulated that only the speaking of dialogues² which Presbyterian educators

¹Terence Tobin, "Popular Entertainment in Seventeenth Century Scotland," Theatre Notebook, XXIII (Winter, 1968-1969), 47-48 and "School Plays in Scotland 1656-1693," Seventeenth Century News, XVII (Autumn, 1969), 49.

²Maclean, pp. 347-48, cites a manuscript by Reverend Manasseh Cutler which indicates the restriction placed upon Princeton students whose dialogues were presented to cultivate dialogue speaking.

advocated to improve public speaking, be presented.³ Dr. Witherspoon had written a pamphlet entitled A Serious Inquiry into the Nature and Effects of the State, 1757, which contended that theatrical entertainment was not consonant with Christianity. Certainly he would not have approved of performing this commencement poem in a more dramatic manner.

There were a number of antecedents to Brackenridge and Freneau's commencement exercise. The College of Philadelphia performed poetic entertainments from 1760 through 1790.⁴ In 1760 Joseph Treat, a Masters candidate at the College of New Jersey's commencement delivered a valedictory oration which included "the present flourishing State of our Public Affairs in North America," after which the class sang an Ode to Science.⁵ This entertainment was a paeon to British patriotism as was The Military Glory of Great Britain, given there two years later.⁶

Brackenridge and Freneau were more concerned, however, with extolling the New World virtues at the expense of

³Henry Grey Graham, Social Life of Scotland in the Eighteenth Century (London, 1937), p. 439.

⁴Quinn, p. 27.

⁵Pennsylvania Gazette, Oct. 9, 1760, cited by Maclean, pp. 216-17.

⁶Ibid., Oct. 21, 1762, cited by Maclean, pp. 253-43.

European achievements in their commencement poem. Although the poem was written as a triologue, only Brackenridge participated in the delivery of this enthusiastic prophecy, the notice of which appeared in the Pennsylvania Chronicle, September 24, 1771.⁷

A Poem on the Rising Glory of America has been treated solely as poetry by literary historians. Undoubtedly the most enthusiastic is Fred Lewis Pattee who considers it:

. . . the first real poem that America ever made - the first poem that was impelled not from a man's soul. It is more than this, it is the first fruit of a new influence in the world of letters - the first literary product of that mighty force which was to set in motion the American and French Revolutions, with all that they mean in human history.⁸

Newlin follows Pattee in treating the work as "epic in content and inspiration."⁹ Although the poem does treat ancient civilizations in a sweeping panoramic fashion, the epical elements are a means of comparison of cultures to a society which the authors envision as being greater than those which previous epochs produced. This differs markedly from the epic concept which recalls past glories in the twilight of a civilization. The Rising Glory of America is as much prophecy as history.

⁷Cited in Maclean, pp. 312-313 and Pattee, p. xxi. Tyler, p. 173, errs in naming Freneau as "interlocuter" of the "metrical dialogue." Maclean's reproduction of the entire commencement notice informs us that Freneau, as well as Madison, did not even attend the event, p. 313.

⁸Pattee, pp. cii-ciii.

⁹Newlin, p. 22.

The collaboration was published originally in 1772. In 1786 Freneau brought out a revised version of the work in which he omitted Brackenridge's lines, deleted anti-Indian passages, softened the implications of the French and Indian War, inserted additional material on British tyranny, and recast the millenary ending in the light of the successful Revolution.¹⁰

In the original text the speakers, Leander, Eugenio, and Acasto, were given speeches by both authors. The following table based upon the collation of the jointly authored text and Freneau's 1786 edition indicates an almost equal division of authorship for each of the characters:

	<u>Leander</u>	<u>Acasto</u>	<u>Eugenio</u>
Speeches by Brackenridge	7	6	5
Speeches by Freneau	5	5	5

¹⁰ [Hugh Henry Brackenridge and Philip Freneau], A Poem on the Rising Glory of America (Philadelphia, 1772), was revised by Philip Freneau in Poems (Philadelphia, 1786). Fred Lewis Pattee in his edition of Freneau's Poems uses the 1809 text which represents the final authorial intention. It is beyond the scope of this study to consider the Freneau revisions of 1786, 1795, and 1809. The changes which Freneau made consist chiefly of rephrasing lines to achieve greater fluidity, and to give the work more relevance to post Revolutionary readers.

Although Freneau said in the preface to his 1786 edition that the "poem is a little altered from the original (published in Philadelphia in 1772), such parts being only inserted here as were written by the author of this volume," Freneau kept the original title which one finds only in the lines written by Brackenridge.

<u>Author</u>	<u>Speaker</u>	<u>Lines</u>	<u>Page</u> ¹¹
Brackenridge	Leander	1-31	50-51
Freneau	Acasto	32-54	52
Brackenridge	Eugenio	55-82	53-54
Freneau	Acasto	83-134	54-56
Freneau	Leander	135-173	56-57
Brackenridge	Eugenio	174-186	58
Brackenridge	Leander	187-212	58-59
Brackenridge	Acasto	213-225	59-60
Freneau	Leander	226-233	60
Freneau	Eugenio	234-261	60-61
Freneau	Leander	262-276	62
Brackenridge	Acasto	277-299	62-63
Freneau	Eugenio	300-324	63-64
Freneau	Acasto	325-348	64-65
Freneau	Leander	349-383	65-67
Brackenridge	Eugenio	384-401	67
Brackenridge	Leander	402-433	68-69
Brackenridge	Acasto	434-447	69
Freneau	Eugenio	448-456	70
Freneau	Leander	457-488	70-71
Brackenridge	Acasto	489-505	71-72
Brackenridge	Leander	506-512	72
Freneau	Eugenio	513-532	73
Freneau	Acasto	533-559	74-75
Brackenridge	Eugenio	560-623	75-78
Brackenridge	Leander	624-631	78
Brackenridge	Acasto	632-650	78-79
Brackenridge	Leander	651-654	79
Brackenridge	Eugenio	655-658	79
Brackenridge	Leander	659-673	79-80
Freneau	Eugenio	674-711	80-82
Brackenridge	Acasto	712-727	82-83

While possessing distinctive traits, the three personae do not differ markedly in their opinions and prejudices. The

¹¹Because collation of a facsimile of the rare 1772 edition in the Library of Congress with the Pattee reprint of this first edition has shown that Professor Pattee's reprint of the collaborated work is accurate, and since Poems of Philip Freneau is more readily available, all citations of A Poem on the Rising Glory of America are from the Pattee reprint and are abbreviated R.G.A.

modus operandi of the piece is not creation of conflict through character, but sustaining dramatic tension and arousing audience interest through anticipation of the vision of the future America. The characters view the same topics from different aspects as the drama professes from the historical past to the molding forces of the present. All manifest basic concord through their varied approaches in the climactic glorious prophecy for the future, thus strengthening the universality of the vision.

The authors employ a tripart structure to implement the theme of America's glory which is announced in the first speech. After this prologue, the three participants engage in an interchange, giving the history of the new settlements. From the events of the past, the characters turn to the continuing present to examine those factors that give impetus to a thriving nation. Tension mounts as the three climax the discussion with their visions of the future when America's potential for greatness has been fully actuated. A brief epilogue summarizes the whole and pronounces the temporal limitations of the new state.

In the prologue Leander describes the past splendors of the ancient and European worlds, then states the theme of the piece:

A Theme more new, tho' not less noble, claims
Our ev'ry thought on this auspicious day;
The rising glory of this western world.¹²

¹²R.G.A., p. 51.

He leads up to his thematic statement by a series of rhetorical repetitions which trace past glories from Memphis to Britain. "No more of Memphis . . . Nor more of Greece . . . No more of Rome . . ." The speech culminates in the negation of the parent country:

No more of Britain and her kings renown'd,
Edward's and Henry's thunderbolts of war;
Her chiefs victorious o'er the Gallic foe;
Illustrious senators, immortal bards,
And wise philosopher, of these no more.¹³

Science, commerce, the muse, and freedom are cited as factors contributing to this eminence.

Acasto inaugurates the exposition or background of the past events, tracing the history of America from Columbus' discovery through Cortez's violation of the new-found civilization. He notes that English negotiation rather than Spanish violence subdued England's portion of the New World. Eugenio continues the account by lauding English explorers Cabot, Hudson, and Raleigh who added "new lustre to Britannia's isle." Acasto then wonders at the pre-Columbian mysteries of America's history, examining three romantic theories of the origin of the western hemisphere and its strange inhabitants. Leander accuses Acasto of sophistry in substituting his fanciful ideas for historical fact, stating that the progenitors of the aborigines were the seafaring Carthaginians. He cites the advanced

¹³Ibid., p. 50.

civilizations already established when latter-day explorers rediscovered the New World:

And in the course of many rolling years
 A num'rous progeny from these arose,
 And spread throughout the coasts; those whom we call
 Brazilians, Mexicans, Peruvians rich,
 The tribes of Chile, Patagon and those
 Who till the shores of Amazon's long stream.
 When first the pow'rs of Europe here attain'd,
 Vast empires, kingdoms, cities, palaces
 And polish'd nations stock'd the fertile land;
 Who has not heard of Cusco, Lima and
 The town of Mexico; huge cities form'd
 From Europe's architecture, e'er the arms
 Of haughty Spain disturb'd the peaceful soil.¹⁴

Eugenio is puzzled by this explanation because the present day Indians possess few qualities which indicate a common origin however remote, much less an advanced civilization. Leander's revulsion at acknowledging any kinship with these natives voices Brackenridge's own hostility to the Indians.¹⁵

¹⁴R.G.A., p. 57.

¹⁵Newlin, p. 21, believes that Brackenridge's hatred of Indians stems from his childhood when settlers were continually preyed upon by red men.

In his writings, Brackenridge continually railed against Indians, particularly the romantic "poetic" notion of the noble savage:

I consider men who are unacquainted with the savages, like women who have read romances, and have as improper an idea of the Indian character in the one case, as the female mind has of real life in the other. The philosopher, weary of the vices of refined life, thinks to find perfect virtue in the simplicity of the unimproved state. He sees green fields and meadows in the customs and virtues of the savages. It is experience only can relieve from this calenture of the intellect. All that is good and great in man results from education; and an uncivilized Indian is but a little way removed from a beast, who, when incensed, can only tear and devour, but the savage applies the ingenuity of man to torture and inflict anguish, National Gazette, February 2, 1792.

How fallen, Oh!
 How much obscur'd is human nature here!
 Shut from the light of science and of truth
 They wander'd blindfold down the steep of time;
 Dim superstition with her ghastly train
 Of daemons, spectres and foreboding signs
 Still urging them to horrid rites and forms
 Of human sacrifice, to sooth the pow'rs
 Malignant, and the dark infernal king.
 To them fair science never op'd her stores,
 Nor sacred truth sublim'd the soul to God;
 No fix'd abode their wand'ring genius knew;
 No golden harvest crown'd the fertile glebe;
 No city then adorn'd the river's bank,
 Nor rising turret overlook'd the stream.¹⁶

The talk turns from the base to the mighty as Eugenio, at Leander's urging, recites the motives underlying the white man's westward migration, chief among which was religious persecution. He notes, almost casually after Leander's impassioned invective, that "hosts" of Indians had to be slain before peace could come to the settlers.¹⁷ Freneau in this speech of Eugenio treats the Indian as part of a hostile environment rather than the active agent of evil that Brackenridge bitterly draws. Freneau further mitigates the case against the Indians by having Leander follow with the plea that their ferocity had been directed under French tutelage against the colonies. General Wolf is mourned as chief casualty in the treacherous war with the French.

The French may have murdered Wolf, but Acasto, again the voice of Brackenridge, reviles only the Indians for the

¹⁶R.G.A., pp. 58-59.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 62.

loss of General Braddock and the men that died with him in the attack on the French headquarters at Fort Duquesne:

His soul too gen'rous for that dastard crew
Who kill unseen and shun the face of day.
Ambush'd in wood, and swamp and thick grown hill,
The bellowing tribes brought on the savage war.
What could avail, O Braddock, then the flame,
The gen'rous flame which fir'd thy martial soul!
What could avail Britannia's warlike troops,
Choice spirits of her isle? What could avail
America's own sons? The skulking foe,
Hid in the forest lay and fought secure,
What could the brave Virginians do, o'power'd
By such vast numbers and their leader dead?¹⁸

Eugenio questions the wisdom of eulogizing the dead. His praise of the living Sir William Johnson, the British superintendent of North American Indian affairs, whose skillful handling of the various tribes had kept many neutral if not friendly during the French and Indian War,¹⁹ silences their scourging remarks. Acasto reiterates Britain's humane approach in contract to Spain's cruelty whose lust for gold reduced the Indians to servitude and destroyed their

¹⁸R.G.A., pp. 62-63. Dunaway, pp. 120, 145, notes that the settlers of Pennsylvania saw defeat of Braddock in terms of personal tragedy as "they experienced for the first time the horrors of Indian massacres." Anglo-French entanglements had no relevance to the settlers upon whom "a mob of savages was turned loose to pillage and massacre." An officer of the Virginia contingent participating in the attack on the French fort was George Washington, later celebrated in Brackenridge's *Masque* in his honor. Freneau in his later revisions of *The Rising Glory of America* substitutes praise of Washington in this encounter for Brackenridge's choice of the unfortunate Braddock.

¹⁹W. Stone, *The Life of Sir William Johnson*, I (Albany, 1865), 4-85. Freneau is the author of this passage.

civilizations. He contrasts the peace the English have achieved by settling the continent as farmers rather than as conquerors. This romantic notion which persisted in a nation's ever seeking the unspoiled has led to the quest of new frontiers:

. . . But we more happy boast
 No metals in our peaceful land,
 No flaming diamond, precious emerald,
 Or blushing sapphire, ruby, chrysolite
 Or jasper red; more noble riches flow
 From agriculture and th' industrious swain,
 Who tills the fertile vale or mountain's brow,
 Content to lead a safe, a humble life
 Midst his own native hills; romantic scenes,
 Such as the muse of Greece did feign so well,
 Envyng their lovely bow'rs to mortal race.²⁰

Acasto's pastoral remarks provide transition to the middle section which serves as rising interest in the forces of the present necessary for a flourishing nation. Agriculture, commerce, and science are apostrophized; religion, art, and freedom are interwoven throughout the speeches as essentials for primacy in civilized society. Leander's praise of the rural life combines natural description, classic references, and romantic painting of farmers snug in thatched cottages by their blazing hearths. Only Eugenio responds by attributing to agriculture the present blessings America enjoys.

All three, however, unite in acknowledging the beneficence of commerce. Leander traces the mistresses of the seas from Bellona to Britannia, inferring by this reference

to sea power that "New York, emerging rears her lofty domes," to hail an international fleet of trade and will usurp the leadership held by England. He uses the trade associated with the maritime to lavish compliments on Philadelphia:

And Philadelphia, mistress of our world,
The seat of arts, of science, and of fame,
Derives her grandeur from the pow'r of trade.
Hail, happy city, where the muses stray,
Where deep philosophy convenes her sons
And opens all her secrets to their view!

Hail, city, blest with liberty's fair beams
And with the rays of mild religion blest!²¹

Acasto echoes Leander's admiration for these "embrio marts of trade;" Eugenio traces the roots of commerce in antiquity, citing Golconda, the ruined Hyerabad city famed for its diamond trade, and Ophir, the city mentioned in I Kings 1:48 and associated with Solomon's gold.

Great as commerce is in the structuring of a successful society, it is upon science, Leander asserts, that the rise and glory of commerce depend. His causality becomes obscured, however, and the paeon to science transplanted from the eastern world blooms suddenly transformed in the New World as a product of the muses in "the last, the best of countries where the arts shall rise and grow luxuriant, graceful." America is also praised as the land blest with the highest of

²¹R.G.A., pp. 68-69.

values, liberty, "without whose aid the noblest genius fails and science irretrievably must die."²²

It is to revelation that Acasto assigns the highest place in the hierarchy of values, praising America as reflecting its fullest light. He proclaims that in this land divine light is found in greater abundance and attributes this spiritual superiority to George Whitefield, mourning that his influential preaching will be heard no more.²³ Leander concludes the eulogy and this section by noting that through death Whitefield attained eternal glory. He implies that only eternity can better America: "From life's high verge he hail'd th' eternal shore."²⁴

The past and present having been explored and expounded, the poem moves to its dramatic climax. Eugenio feels that men

²²R.G.A., pp. 70-71.

²³George Whitefield, the famous evangelist, came to America in 1739, and returned several times to preach revivals. He died at Newburyport, Massachusetts, September 30, 1770. In 1771 Whitefield's works began to appear in print. Although Whitefield was out of favor with the older, more conservative elements, his followers were many among the younger and more liberal clergy. Laurence Tyerman, The Life of the Reverend George Whitefield (London, 1877, p. 207). Harvard and Yale were particularly hostile to the revival movement. Butterfield, p. 2. The evangelist, however, had on two occasions at the invitation of the Reverend Johnathan Dickinson, the first President, preached at Princeton's first site, Elizabethtown, New Jersey, Maclean, p. 122.

²⁴R.G.A., p. 72.

lack the vision to see if their hopes for a promising future will be realized. But undaunted, Acasto calls upon the muse to give him the first enthusiastic utterance of the future:

. . . I see, I see
A thousand kingdoms rais'd, cities and men
Num'rous as sands upon the ocean shore;
Nations shall grow and states not less in fame
Than Greece and Rome of old; we too shall boast
Our Alexanders, Pompeys, heroes, kings
That in the womb of time yet dormant lye
Waiting the joyful hour for life and light.²⁵

The more pragmatic Eugenio, infected with predicting a great future for America, reasons to the future greatness "from the course of things, and downward trace the vertiges of time," to cite former civilizations which have risen in a westerly direction, viz., Assyria, Macedon, Rome, Britain. He agrees that the new western continent will be the scene of new empires and predicts that American locales shall rival now famous spots. Made imperial by a vast armada, the Americans shall "spread their commerce to remotest lands, or bear their thunder round the conquered world."²⁶ Leander, also filled with the spirit of prophecy, sees America's greatness in the context of patriots rivaling the heroes of antiquity:

And here fair freedom shall forever reign.
I see a train, a glorious train appear,
Of Patriots plac'd in equal fame with those
Who nobly fell for Athens or for Rome.
The sons of Boston, resolute and brave,
The firm supporters of our injur'd rights,

²⁵R.G.A., p. 74.

²⁶Ibid., pp. 75-78.

Shall lose their splendours in the brighter beams
Of patriots fam'd and heroes yet unborn.²⁷

The muse still inspires Acasto as he sees for America a new Homer, Milton, and Pope on the bright American scene.²⁸ His lauding of American rivers as homes for the muses prompts Leander and Eugenio to respond in quatrains celebrating other rivers from which new "Theban bards" will drink their inspiration. Leander closes this natural splendor sequence with a Miltonic Genesis of the New World as peace reigns supreme awaiting Emanuel. In an attitude of quiet contemplation Eugenio ends the vision of the future reemphasizing the priority of revelation. America will be the New Canaan, the New Jerusalem, a paradise where saints will experience the millennium. He ends the paeon by a swelling eulogy which possesses an enthusiasm and spirit akin to the majesty of Dryden's grand chorus of "A Song for St. Cecilia's Day."

. . . Music's charms
Shall swell the lofty soul and harmony
Triumphant reign; thro' ev'ry grove shall sound
The cymbal and the lyre, joys too divine
For fallen man to know. Such days the world
And such, America, thou first shall have
When ages yet to come have run their round
And future years of bliss alone remain.²⁹

²⁷R.G.A., p. 78.

²⁸Marder, p. 135, cites the error of Robert E. Spiller, et al (eds.), Literary History of the United States, I (New York, 1948), 170, in attributing these lines to Freneau. The passage is omitted in all of Freneau's revisions.

²⁹R.G.A., p. 82.

Acasto's final speech stands as the epilogue, summing up the new America as the epitome of all human existence. Tribute is paid to freedom, science, and art, the driving forces that will have given her eminence. Acasto's far-seeing vision enables him to predict the only limitation on so superb an empire:

. . . Hail, happy land,
 The seat of empire, the abode of kings,
 The final stage where time shall introduce
 Renowned characters, and glorious works
 Of high invention and of won'drous art
 Which not the ravages of time shall waste
 Till he himself has run his long career:
 Till all those glorious orbs of light on high,
 The rolling wonders that surround the ball,
 Drop from their spheres extinguish'd and consum'd;
 When final ruin with her fiery car
 Rides o'er creation, and all nature's works
 Are lost in chaos and the womb of night.³⁰

In spite of the dual authorship, three fairly consistent characters emerge. Leander, the most dominant and forceful, gives direction to the whole, beginning with his prologue. It is he who delivers the first speech on the structuring of society through agriculture and commerce, threading throughout his discourses praise of the muses and freedom. His is the final word on commerce, and the only speech dealing with science. It is he who enunciates the hierarchy of values--commerce dependent on science, liberty the necessary ingredient to both. His pragmatic nature leads him to see the future in terms of righted wrongs since a nation cannot be strong if

³⁰R.G.A., pp. 82-83.

human rights are abridged. His one lyrical lapse is the quatrain sustaining the section on America's riparian splendors. His final authoritative word on the material fulfillment of America precedes Eugenio's religious rapture, providing the transition for the envisioned millenium.

Leander's vilification of the savage Indians while most startling is quite consistent with his reverence of science and truth. Even Freneau's softening of his attitude in placing the blame for their devastating attack on the French still carries overtones of hatred for their inherent "deadly malice" and "black design."

Leander contrasts with Acasto, who is a visionary preoccupied with the unusual and the romantic. Taking Leander's direction to sing of the New World, Acasto makes the first of his many calls upon the muses before launching into his Columbiad. His recital of fanciful theories concerning the Indian's origins earns Leander's censure as a sophist. Having been somewhat tempered by this remonstrance, Acasto follows Leander's Indian invective by emphasizing the improvements the white man's civilization has brought to the rude shores. He reiterates Leander's closing words of the prologue, seeing America's prominence in terms of commerce, learning, the height of liberty, and the home of the muses. His first elegy also reflects the leader's influence. Acasto's mourning for Braddock and his fallen comrades shows

a residue of prejudice and hate engendered by Leander's previous speech.

His romantic nature has him see agriculture in the pastoral context of the muses rather than the practical reality of Eugenio and Leander's disquisitions. His visionary nature prompts him to anticipate the prophecy with predictions of commercial supremacy. On science Acasto is silent, choosing instead to direct the attention of the others to the triumph of revelation in his lament for the loss of George Whitefield from the American revivalist scene.

In the climactic vision of the future, Acasto's visionary character becomes fully defined as he, again inspired by the muse, begins to prophesy. Excitedly he foretells of kingdoms, cities, and nations rivaling antiquity's finest. His final lament bemoans that time has placed his generation in the gestation period of the glorifying process. Comforted by the power of the muse, Acasto delights to predict the giants of literature that America will produce: Homer, Milton, and Pope. His near-divine ecstasy inaugurates the romantic vision of America's rivers as the new home for the muses.

In the epilogue Acasto emerges fully developed. His visionary nature has overcome Leander's influence as he pronounces for the new state a magnificence enduring until time itself is no more.

Not so finely drawn, Eugenio lacks the authority of Leander and the idealistic appeal of Acasto. All of his

speeches follow from directions given by Leander, continue a topic begun by Acasto or Leander, or as in the case of the vision of the millenium, take their cue from transition provided. In this subordinate role, he augments Acasto's Columbiad, questions the Indians' fallen state, allowing Leander to pour forth his diatribe. His contribution to commerce is negligible, being more a display of pedantry than a viable discussion. Of science he makes no mention.

His one flash of strength lies in his ability to turn the thoughts of his fellows from the departed military heroes and preacher to considerations of the present. But, bound by the known, he lacks the courage to peer ahead, deeming the future beyond the ken of mortals. Emboldened by Acasto, however, this timid disciple reasons to the future in a speech distinguished more by length than originality. His last "vision" of an American basking in the light or revelation is predictably couched in clichés: New Jerusalem, New Canaan, New Adam.

Although Brackenridge and Freneau evenly divided the work,³¹ structural and character analyses indicate that Brackenridge conceived the design and controlled its execution. He authored the stately prologue which states the theme and lists the major topics. His epilogue compresses the participants' hopes and visions in a triumphant assertion

³¹Of the 727 lines, Brackenridge wrote 348, Freneau 379.

of glory circumscribed only by temporal limitations.

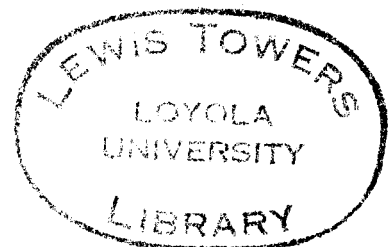
Unfortunately, the first division, the past, is marred by a power struggle that prolongs the section with tangential matters--Freneau on Spain's South American exploitation, Brackenridge on North American Indian atrocities. Even in these digressions, the direction of Brackenridge can be traced. He has Eugenio divert attention from the southern hemisphere to the more relevant discoveries of English explorers, ending by posing the question of all Indians' origins. Freneau falls into the trap by claiming a common ancestry through the Carthaginians. This provides an opening for Brackenridge through all three participants to inveigh against these fallen representatives of the race. Freneau regains historical perspective with the injection of the French and Indian Wars; however, Brackenridge capitalizes on this reference by interlacing a moving memorial to both British and American casualties with the final damnation of the barbaric tribes.

Brackenridge does lose control of the design when agriculture, which so far has received no mention, is introduced by Freneau at the opening of the second section. However, Eugenio's speech on the subject by Brackenridge is far more relevant to demands of the present. The next two emphatic statements on commerce are solely his. Although Brackenridge had provided for an exposition of the role of science, this

role became obscured by Freneau in one of the most puzzling works of the piece. The blessings of revelation, earlier mentioned in the castigation of the Indians becomes vividly alive through Whitefield's example that Brackenridge has Acasto and Leander delineate.

Although the smooth transition to the climax and the first of the predictions are not his, Brackenridge provides the most specific foretellings in sparkling, fast-paced dialogue that enunciates the most stimulating visions of the poem. Unfortunately, his overdrawn, labored speech of Eugenio reasoning to a glory tedious in detail distracts for a moment from his more cogent utterances. The topics of science, commerce, freedom and the muses, threaded throughout the work are finally woven together to depict a brilliant future. This final speech of Leander would have served as a more unifying and succinct conclusions to this section than the present millenary accretion.

The characters of Leander and Acasto are more fully defined by Brackenridge. Under his skillful handling, Leander asserts his leadership and maintains this ascendancy throughout. Leander's muddled speech purportedly on science is not from Brackenridge's pen. Through his authorship we see Acasto progress from mere respondent in the earlier part to eulogist for national heroes to seer whose powers extend to the end of time.



Eugenio, the least memorable of the trio, seldom rises above mediocrity in the hands of either author. Although his pompous remarks on commerce are not Brackenridge's, the aspiring Scots scholar must be faulted for Eugenio's exhausting "reasoned vision." Nevertheless, his first two speeches, done by Brackenridge, provide suitable exposition and transition to the respondents. The last speech that Brackenridge wrote for him furnishes an adequate comment on the natural splendor section. Fortunately, the bard of the Barrens had no hand in the final catastrophe of Eugenio's millenary utterance.

The flexible medium of blank verse provides a suitable vehicle for Brackenridge's narrative sweeps, lyrical tribute, and panoramic visions necessary for so comprehensive a subject. While intense hostility to Indians marks some of his efforts, by placing their savage acts in historical perspective he raises the sentiment from the narrow confines of personal antagonism to the dimensions of a national problem. His transitions from single speeches and conversational tone sustained in two and three part dialogues presage his facility in this aspect of the dramatic form.

Viewed as a single effort, The Rising Glory of America represents an embryonic American drama through the assorted views of the past, present, and future that constitute the body of the piece. The style and subject permit the auditors to feel awe, to be caught up in the perception of currents of

great magnitude, to feel a part of the past become prologue of a material and spiritual eminence. In this work, the Rising Empire Ideal is first articulated. By its encouragement to think of America as not British, by its national address, by its projection of the national past beyond the migration of the seventeenth century, The Rising Glory of America inaugurates a period of national literary consciousness.

After graduation from Princeton, Brackenridge stayed on for several months tutoring undergraduates to pay his expenses while pursuing additional theological studies³² required by the exacting New York Synod.³³ In the autumn of 1771, after obtaining a license to preach, he left Princeton to teach at Somerset Academy, Somerset County, Maryland.³⁴

With him at the academy was his colleague and collaborator Philip Freneau, in a subordinate teaching position. Although Brackenridge delighted in his new duties, Freneau found this academic milieu most distasteful, referring to his charges as "leeches," and counting the days left on his contract.³⁵

³²Holliday, p. 275.

³³Maclean, pp. 26-29.

³⁴Pattee, pp. xxi-xxiii.

³⁵Ibid.

On September 28, 1774 the Headmaster of Somerset returned to his alma mater to receive his Master of Arts degree, delivering A Poem on Divine Revelation. The disruptive events of the past three years had produced a crisis affecting the commencement exercises. On April 19, 1774, the highest student in the undergraduate class had been severely censured by the Board of Trustees for "encouraging and promoting some unwarrantable and riotous proceedings among the students, particularly in publicly burning the effigies of his Excellency Governor [Thomas] Hutchinson" [Massachusetts]." President Witherspoon was directed to forbid the student giving the Salutatory Oration even though he as first in his class had been appointed by the faculty for this honor. President Witherspoon, who was later to speak so eloquently for the final break with Britain and sign the Declaration of Independence, did not oppose this ruling.³⁵

Brackenridge's dramatic ode reflects the conservative element in the colonies that tried to have the issues adjudicated through lawful channels. It represents a final plea for reason enlightened by faith to prevail over emotional impulses directing extra-legal acts of defiance or destruction. Although in two years the Board and the President were to become active supporters of Confederation,³⁶ Brackenridge's

³⁶Maclean, p. 318.

³⁷Ibid.

mood was still attuned to those who felt the conflict could be resolved by peaceful means.

The preface to A Poem on Divine Revelation functions as an apology for his "Poetical Oration." In his apologia the author admits his subject is too historical for "poetic dress and ornament," which is a Ciceronian disclaimer, for the poem is replete with such devices. Brackenridge asserts that fancy or imagination is the strength of a poet in a manner which echoes Alexander Pope. Although his critical method and poetical frame are neoclassical, Brackenridge's libertarian thoughts are decidedly preromantic. The poet acknowledges his indebtedness to John Milton, who "may be traced through the whole of the performance, though the Author has not been able to attain anything of the spirit of that immortal bard." He defends his imitation by citing the Longinian method of using models. Brackenridge posits that he is "free from censure" for having used Milton because he did not capture "his excellent spirit."³⁸ His use of what Augustans considered common property³⁹ as well as the pseudo Miltonic diction places this work in the early eighteenth-century tradition.

³⁸[Hugh Henry Brackenridge], A Poem on Divine Revelation (Philadelphia, 1774), p. [1]. All further citations will be abbreviated P.D.R.

³⁹James Sutherland, A Preface to Eighteenth Century Poetry (Oxford, 1963), pp. 56-57, and 133-36.

The argument notes the major incidents of the poem. The historical frame, which Brackenridge emphasizes, has led Newlin to label the poem an account of the spread of Christianity from the Holy Land to the American colonies.⁴⁰ The poet addresses his audience in an apostrophe that shows a concern with making his historical survey relevant to his listeners. He employs comparisons of the familiar with the "antique," e.g. his reference to Nassau Hall and "Selma Hall of shells."⁴¹ Brackenridge was concerned with showing the continuity of tradition from the Old World to the New, under the aspect of religious faith.

I sing the rise of that all glorious light,
Whose sacred dawn the ated fathers saw
By faith's clear eye, through many a cloud obscure
And heavy mist between; they saw it beam
From Judah's royal tribe, they saw it shine
On rocky hills and barren vallies smile.⁴²
The desert blossom and the wilds voice.

Brackenridge traces divine revelation from the fall of Adam through the Old Testament prophets. From the writers of the Scriptures, pagan philosophers received wisdom. Although this position is difficult to reconcile, Brackenridge takes this apocraphal stance to underscore the necessity of divine intervention which must aid human reason. The religious enthusiasm combined with political freedom realized under the

⁴⁰Newlin, p. 29.

⁴¹Brackenridge alludes to James McPherson's Ossian.

⁴²P.D.R., p. 3.

Christian dispensation related in Miltonic setting replete with mythological allusion exemplifies the neoclassical conglomerate:

Vain were their searches, and their reason vain,
Else whence the visionary tales receiv'd,
Of num'rous deities in earth, or heav'n
Or sea, or river, or the shades profound
Of Erebus, dark kingdom of the dead.
Weak deities of fabl'd origin
From king or here, to the skies advanc'd
For sanguinary appetite, and skill
In cruel feats or arms, and tyranny
O'er ev'ry right, and privilege of man.⁴³

In his survey of the ancient world the Greco-Roman civilization has so much appeal to Brackenridge that the recounting of "Dark superstition" is longer and more vigorous than the passages describing the reign of the true God. The concentration upon sins and sinners rather than upon the less interesting aspects of virtue and the saved is congruous with sermons of this period, many of which stressed dire deeds and drastic consequences rather than less entertaining positive admonitions.

The pagan and Christian forces cannot co-exist, and a war of ideologies ensues. While the sentiments which the poet veils in pacifistic language indicate a willingness to fight oppression, the apparent placidity echoes the conservative hope for legal redress prevalent in an audience so largely composed of divines:

She [Peace] mourns not that fair liberty depress'd
Which kings tyrannic can extort, but that

⁴³P.D.R., p. 5.

Pure freedom of the soul to truth divine
 Which first indulg'd her, with envious hand
 Pluck'd thence, left hideous slavery behind.
 She weeps not loss of property on earth,
 Nor stirs the multitude to dire revenge
 With headlong violence, but soothes the soul
 To harmony and peace, bids them aspire
 With emulation and pure zeal of heart,
 To that high glory in the world unseen,
 And crown celestial which pure virtue gives.⁴⁴

The description of the war has more fire and passion than the classical strains of the earlier sections. This war is a continuing struggle for truth. The opposition from Roman Catholicism, Mohammedanism and other opponents of the gospel make this altercation ever present until the Reformation. It is curious that Brackenridge does not mention Germany or Martin Luther, but rather emphasizes Bohemia as the cradle of the Protestant revolt.⁴⁵

⁴⁴P.D.R., p. 11.

⁴⁵Bohemia was the country of John Huss (1370-1415), the reformer who forms the link between John Wycliff and Martin Luther. Although Huss substantially agrees with other early Protestant heresiarchs, the Hussite wars (1419-1432) which followed Huss' martyrdom epitomized the growing nationalism and desire for religious reform. The nationalistic overtones of religion appealed strongly to Brackenridge, who manifests, even at this time, a preference for country before sect. Cf. The English Works of Wycliff, ed. J. D. Matthew (Early English Text Society, 1880), and F. H. H. Lutzow, The Life and Times of Master John Hus (New York, 1909).

Since Prague was considered the "Paris of the East" in the late eighteenth century, the use of Bohemia may also be considered a reference to the extent to which European Protestantism had established a foothold.

Brackenridge recounts England's religious struggles to free herself from the papacy. He concentrates upon the seventeenth-century religio-political strife, for the Puritan exodus to America was the most dramatic and fruitful example of divinely inspired religious and civil liberty motivation:

Of those who shunning that fell rage of war,
And persecution dire, when civil pow'r,
Leagu'd in with sacerdotal sway triumph'd
O'er ev'ry conscience, and the lives of men
Did brave th' Atlantic deep and through its storms
Sought these Americ shores: these happier shores
Where birds of calm delight play, where not
Rome's pontiff high, not arbitrary king,
Leagu'd in with sacerdotal sway are known.
But peace and freedom link'd together dwell,
And reformation in full glory shines.⁴⁶

Brackenridge rhapsodizes over the landscape of the New World where the colonists can be free, "from Massachusett-shore, to the cold lakes margin'd with snow." The author sees the settlements as bastions of civilization. The characteristic optimism for the potential of the New World led Brackenridge to insert an enthusiastic digression in a lengthy footnote on the organization of Somerset Academy, which functions as an advertisement of the school. The footnote is a curio, but provides helpful information about colonial education.⁴⁷

⁴⁶P.D.R., p. 14.

⁴⁷Ibid., pp. 15-16. "A Board of Trustees consisting of 15 gentlemen of the first reputation in the county, convene once every three months, or oftener if necessary, in order to inspect the situation and regulate the affairs of

The truth has blossomed in the soil of a free new world, where the wisdom of the older world will realize its full potential as Christian leader. In this context, Brackenridge declares for America a Manifest Destiny:

. . . When these Americ shores
Shall far and wide be light, and heav'nly day
Shall in full glory rise on many a reign,
Kingdom and empire bending to the south
And nation touching the Pacific shore.⁴⁸

The concepts expressed in A Poem on Divine Revelation require grandiloquent language. Brackenridge is more sophisticated in his appropriation of the Miltonic style than in his political prophesying. He uses adjectives such as "orient" and "lucid," and Latinate words such as "refluent" and "umbrage." He employs inversions of noun and adjective and object and predicate in the same manner as his seventeenth-century model. Chief sources of inspiration are Paradise Lost and "Hymn to the Morning of Christ's Nativity." The citation of a frankly imitative passage should not lead the critic into the pitfalls of source hunting that preoccupies Thomas P. Haviland.⁴⁹ The Miltonic strains are for

the school. A steward is chosen by them who lays in provisions of the best kind and at the lowest rates . . . The general plenty and cheapness of provisions in this settlement, and the economy of the Trustees in managing the School, the expenses of education seldom amount to more than 18 per annum Board £13 - Tuition £5 . . . the Bell rings for prayers generally at sunrise; for study at the interval of half an hour. The remaining part of the day is divided between study and vacation. In the evening the bell rings for prayers, after which the students retire to their chambers."

⁴⁸P.D.R., p. 20.

⁴⁹Thomas P. Haviland, "The Miltonic Quality of Brackenridge's Poem on Divine Revelation," PMLA, LVI (June, 1941), 588-92.

the most part echoic rather than mere reworkings of older poetry. The baroque heroic style of the poem is less exalted than a number of other Miltonic imitations which colonial writers executed,⁵⁰ but Brackenridge's contemporaries seem to have preferred a more fiery exhortation in the national interest.⁵¹

Brackenridge used the heroic style which he had employed in his commencement poems in his patriotic plays, but never employed the exalted techniques in his other writings. One can posit that to suit the formal occasions the poet felt constrained to write resounding rhetoric. The texts possess the youthful enthusiasm for a land of promise which rescues the writer from youthful bombast. He wishes to endow America with grandeur through soaring language. It is exuberance rather than pomposity which permeates A Poem on Divine Revelation. The seeds of the patriotism which flower in his plays had been sown. Brackenridge had demonstrated the literary ability to create proficient poetry. He would soon use his talents to create two of the best patriotic plays staged in Revolutionary America.

CHAPTER II

THE BATTLE OF BUNKERS-HILL

While Brackenridge was quietly conducting his academy on the western shores of Maryland, the shadows of the coming struggle with Great Britain were lengthening over the colonies. Although the Americans were united in their opposition to the oppressive measures of the mother country, they were divided on the question of how severely to deal with them. Early in 1775 Franklin stated before the House of Commons that in his extensive colonial wanderings he had not heard anyone wish for complete independence.¹ Even after Lexington and Concord, the conservative elements in the colonies still hoped for peaceful redress. Dr. Witherspoon himself had written a pastoral letter, issued by the Synod of New York and Philadelphia in May, 1775 recommending all under the care of the Synod "to vow their allegiance to the British Crown." All members with one exception had endorsed this position.² The moderate colonials, who sought peaceful

¹Pattee, p. xcix.

²Maclean, p. 391.

amelioration, as well as a number of the conservative factions who had supported the mother country were drawn to the cause of liberation after the Battle of Bunkers Hill. This encounter, with its romantic appeal, influenced morale on both sides and helped to unite the American colonials in an all-out effort to free themselves of British rule. From a strict military view, Bunkers Hill was not a strategic fight because little territory was gained or lost, but the ramifications of the battle are inestimable because the valiant if foolhardy encounter captured the American imagination. One might consider the Battle of Bunkers Hill as the completion of the emotional set which had begun with the Boston Tea Party.

A number of major historical developments are encapsulated in incidents, which, of themselves, are not of major importance. Because such events are often shrouded in oversimplification and assume mythic proportions, it is necessary to place them in perspective. The Battle of Bunkers Hill is such an incident. Diverse contemporary accounts range from casting Bunkers Hill as a Blenheim to an Armegeddon. Brackenridge's play falls into the latter category.

The Battle of Bunkers Hill resulted in the culmination of American patriotic sentiments which were aroused by the 1773 demonstration of Bostonian "Indians" who dumped tea chests into the harbor to protest repressive taxation. As a result of the Boston Tea Party an aroused English Parliament then passed five measures in 1774 which Americans termed the "Intolerable Acts." The first three of these acts were

repressive measures against the colony of Massachusetts. Sister colonies joined in decrying these acts as punitive reprisals, and thus began a united feeling which had rarely existed with such force or intensity in the past. The Quartering Act, however, applied to all other colonies as well as to Massachusetts. This act authorized colonial governors to requisition such buildings as might be needed for the use of royal troops stationed within boundaries of a given colony. It was the Quebec Act which seemed to the Americans quite as intolerable as any of the rest. Yet this act was designed by an insensitive Parliament not as a punitive measure, but represented a spirit of accommodation towards the French subjects of Great Britain in the newly acquired territories from the French and Indian War. The French, unaccustomed to participation in the affairs of government, were given an autocratic regime; French rather than English legal traditions were authorized in the trial of civil suits; and Roman Catholicism was accorded full recognition. Most offensive--or intolerable--was the complete disregard of the western land claims of the seaboard colonies: the boundaries of Quebec were extended to include the territory north of the Ohio River and east of the Mississippi.

These measures could scarcely have been better calculated to arouse the spirit of resistance in America, especially with the arrival of four regiments of British troops under General Thomas Gage to occupy Boston. A network of

committees called Committees of Correspondence established by Samuel Adams began to function, and the call for a Continental Congress to meet in September went out.

Although the First Continental Congress, which began its sessions in Philadelphia, September 4, 1774, had many members with more conservative views, a plan of compromise came within one vote of adoption. In its place the more extreme elements succeeded in passing the Declaration of Rights and Grievances stating the American case against taxation without representation and demanding repeal of the Intolerable Acts and others. This body also set up the "Continental Association" to consolidate the Revolutionary position and force the people to choose sides. These associations were designed to prevent the importation of all British goods, wares, or merchandise whatsoever. Enforcement, illegal as it was, was carried out by popularly elected local committees. So effective were these measures that Parliament voted to send more troops to America.

Colonial resistance was most intense in Massachusetts, where George III had evidently determined to stage a test of arms. Minutemen drilled on village commons and collected munitions with which to defend themselves. Neither side wished to precipitate hostilities, but finally General Gage, who had been made royal governor of Massachusetts, decided to seize the military supplies the colonials had accumulated at

Concord. For this purpose a small detachment of British troops left Boston on April 18, 1775 only to be met at Lexington by a small detachment of militia. Dispersing them by force of arms, the British marched on to Concord and destroyed the supplies. On the return trip, however, the red-coats were fired upon by farmers and militiamen so effectively that the retreat to Boston became a humiliating rout. Heartened by the good news, armed militiamen from all over New England collected around Boston and laid siege to the city.³

The Second Continental Congress, which had begun its sessions in Philadelphia on May 10, 1775, designated the troops gathered at Boston as the Continental Army on June 15, putting George Washington at its head as Commander-in-Chief. With the elevation of the local troops to a national army and assumption of authority to direct the war by a representative colonial body, the ensuing military engagements lost the character of local skirmishes and became full-fledged battles of the united colonies against the mother country. The first of these took place on June 17, 1775 when Gage, now reinforced by ten thousand men, sent a detachment to drive the Americans from Bunker Hill (as it is now designated), overlooking Charlestown, only to suffer two humiliating reverses before

³A. C. McLaughlin, et al., Source Problems in United States History (New York, 1918), presents an interesting study of these early battles.

the colonials for lack of ammunition were obliged to give way. But the revolt of all the colonies had begun, to be sanctioned on July 4, 1776 with the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

The signal moral victory gained at Bunkers Hill provided an appropriate example of valor and patriotism for those committed to the American cause. Inspired by the sacrifices of the New England patriots, Hugh Henry Brackenridge used the battle as the subject for his first drama.

On the title page of The Battle of Bunkers-Hill Brackenridge quoted Virgil's Aeneid: "Pulcrumque more puccurrit in armis;" his epistolary dedication to Richard Stockton⁴ states that the play honors "some brave Men, who have fallen in the Cause of Liberty." The panegyric element so dominates the play that one may consider it a thematic reinforcement of the proposition that the Americans fight on the side of righteousness, for the author equates bravery with conviction

⁴Richard Stockton, a fellow alumnus of the College of New Jersey, became one of the most respected lawyers in the colonies. Stockton went to England in 1776 and upon his return was elected to the Continental Congress. He inspected the northern army and reported its condition to Congress.

Brackenridge mentions his gratitude to the dedicatee for the "many Civilities, received from YOUR Family, at an earlier Period of my Life, while a Student at NEW-JERSEY College." Because of common interests, viz., school, law, military problems, and politics, the statesman may be considered an influence upon the writer. Stockton, who questioned thoroughly the Declaration of Independence before he signed it, was among the more prudent patriots who entered the Revolutionary martyrology. For a life of Richard Stockton see J. Sanderson, Biography of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence (Philadelphia, 1847), pp. 159-62, ff.

that America's struggle has divine approbation. The stated purpose is honorific, but the leitmotif of this war drama may be expressed by Robert Southey's famous line from On the Rise and Progress of Popular Disaffection: "The laws are with us, and God on our side." The continual reiteration of support by the deity strengthens the emotional tone of The Battle of Bunkers-Hill and helps to give this drama of a lost battle an urgent and immediate quality which the commencement entertainments lack.

In his dedication to the Continental Congressional Representative from New Jersey, Brackenridge states that his school play may serve other American seminaries. The author wrote the play for presentation by his students at Somerset Academy who presented it in 1775.⁵ The Battle of Bunkers-Hill is in the tradition of British school plays and dramatic adaptations of the period. The emphasis is rhetorical to provide students with experience in public speaking rather than theatrical. When English school masters "staged" dramas, whether they wrote original plays, changed other works such as Latin epics into dramatic form, or presented well-known plays, they stressed declamatory techniques rather than theatrical effects. Instructors emphasized speech rather than movement, scenery, costume, or any other components of the professional

⁵Brackenridge, Gazette Publications, p. 279, states that he wrote The Battle of Bunkers-Hill in 1775, but there is no record of the date of performance.

drama, for their concern was educational, hence utilitarian, rather than aesthetic. Brackenridge's play is rhetorical exercise rather than entertainment incorporating other arts. The author used this teaching tool to inculcate patriotism as well as to upgrade declamation.

The prologue written by Lieutenant Colonel John Parke, which is spoken by a Lieutenant Colonel in the Continental Army, is a call to arms in heroic couplets. It is vigorous and fastmoving and has a recruiting poster aura which is suitable for the drama. The free souls possessed of "martial ardor" will enjoy "mental Liberty." Those who fight will win immortality in the minds of their fellow countrymen. The argument of the play is stated in the prologue as a celestial alliance for the colonists: "freedom's sacred cause . . . Twas Heav'n's own cause." The prologue finally offers assurance of ultimate victory over the forces who fight half-heartedly to preserve an enslaving monarchy because Americans battle to defend their rights and to protect their native land.

The play opens in the American camp at Cambridge, where the American officers Warren, Putnam, and Gardiner engage in an emotional discussion of the horrors of the war. Warren is anxious to engage in battle because the Boston area is starving. Putnam commiserates with Warren, attributing the inactivity to British cowardice in refusing to fight against matched forces. Gardiner warns of the dangers involved in trying to take Boston

because of the British fortifications which bar all approaches to the town. Since the town is impregnable, Warren wonders if a few men could not take Bunkers Hill at night, thus giving their forces a vantage from which to decimate the British fleet, comparing their strategy to that of the angel of the Lord destroying Sennacherib's army.⁶ Gardiner agrees to Putnam's plan to take seven hundred men up the hill at night where the other generals will join him at dawn. Gardiner knows that the dangerous plan will succeed because the Americans combat in the cause of God.

Act two takes place in Boston where the British generals Gage, Howe, and Burgoyne show little enthusiasm about the Revolution. Burgoyne, voicing the shame of the British army besieged by untrained rebels, is perplexed by the defeat of his troops at Lexington by these same untrained civilians. Gage tells him that the Americans possess fierce valor because they are fighting for their ideals and refutes Burgoyne's depiction of the colonists as barbarous. Howe concurs with Gage and observes that the Spartan existence which the rebels have led has made them formidable adversaries. Unlike Gardiner who has drawn his sword with determination, Howe does not

⁶Sennacherib was the Assyrian monarch whose conquests are recounted in 4 Kings, 18-19, and Isaias, 36-37.

Although the cuneiform prism (Oriental Institute, University of Chicago), which records the eight campaigns of Sennacherib indicates that the monarch wrought more improvements than destruction, Brackenridge uses Ezechias' enemy as a personification of evil and oppression.

relish bearing arms against the colonists. But he feels that the British will be laughingstocks if they do not crush the rebellion. In asking "Where is British valour?" Howe underscores the American generals' references to British cowardice. His sympathy with the rebel cause and noting of his troops' indifference foreshadow the American moral victory.

In decrying the evaporation of Britain's esprit de corps, the British acknowledge that their civilization is in its twilight. Despite this lack of enthusiasm, Howe wishes to battle if only to end the disagreeable task. Gage, bowing to his colleague's experience, feels that promising the soldiers booty can engender sufficient interest to squelch the insurrectionists. The British plan marking the main line of resistance and deploying tactics is far more sophisticated than the American plan.

The third act consists of a speech of twenty-one lines which Gardiner delivers to his men on Bunkers Hill. The stage directions note that he is accompanied by seven hundred men.⁷ The general spurs his men to fight heroically to the death against the forces of the Casius-like Gage.

Gage opens the first scene of the fourth act by

⁷The stage direction, which is historically accurate if not theatrically feasible, illustrates the consideration of published plays as closet rather than acting material. During the late eighteenth century, directions frequently served as a means of supplying the reader with information rather than giving actors illumination on stage business.

expressing his longing for peace of soul and trying to convince himself that honor awaits him when he puts down the rebellion. In rhetorical questioning, he plumbs the cause of his tension which is his imprisonment of innocent civilians in the cause of a tyrannical king. This allusion to the unpopular king affords motivation for the leader's confusion and the soldier's diffidence. The most overwhelming concern of the royal governor is the guilt he feels in breaking an oath to support that monarch. Burgoyne, entering to tell of the inferior entrenchments which the rebels have made while the British delay, hurls personal invectives at the enemy. As he rants, Howe sounds the alarm and sends commands to block off the rebel reinforcements, ordering the cannonade to fire on the fortified hill. Gage's soliloquy about his childhood dream of death closes the scene as he attempts to rationalize his compulsive fear of dying by taking a fatalistic attitude toward his own demise.

In the second scene, Howe addresses the British Army, calling upon them to put down the rebellion out of loyalty to the King and decrying the values for which the colonists are fighting. In his urgings he describes all that is beneficial as deriving directly from the mother country. As Howe views the "snake-stream'd ensign"⁸ of the Americans he reminds

⁸Brackenridge refers to the Virginia flag which was first flown January 2, 1776 and was adopted by Commodore Esk Hopkins shortly thereafter as the first Navy Jack. The snake

his troops of the recent victory against France and promises royal generosity in the distribution of spoils.

The fifth act consists of ten brief scenes in the Shakespearean vein, giving brief glimpses of the various locales and the progress of the battle. Warren leads his men to fight inspired by the thoughts of liberty and the British injustices to civil rights. He ends the scene in crashing revolutionary rhetoric aligning the cause of liberty with the cause of Heaven. The speech of Gardiner in the second act continues the exhortations with a reiteration of the freedom versus slavery argument and British usurpation of American possessions. In addition, Gardiner outlines the choices open if they fail: they can join the Indians, emigrate to Canada, or serve the conqueror. But anything other than victory or death is ignoble. A life lost in this battle will purchase

diagrammed bend dexter on a field of seven red and six white stripes rides above the motto, "Don't Tread on Me."

Although Benjamin Franklin reputedly conceived the rattlesnake emblem in 1747, and the use of the snake and motto was popular with the colonists, the flags on which the serpent appears, viz., The Culpepper (Virginia) Minute Men flag, two South Carolina flags, the Colonel Gadsden flag, there is no record that the groups who flew these emblems engaged at Bunkers Hill. Bernard J. Cigrand, The History of American Emblems (New York, 1920), p. 178.

There are two flags which are known to have been used at Bunkers Hill: "a flag with a union of white upon which was a red cross of the same pattern. Both bore the inscriptions "An Appeal to Heaven" and Qui Transtulit Sustinet." Bernard J. Cigrand, The Real History of the United States Flag (Chicago, 1922), pp. 16-20, 22, 28.

Since Brackenridge wrote the play, which was performed during the year before the flag he mentions came into being, it would seem that he revised the performance manuscript before publishing the play.

later fame.⁹

The locale shifts to the British in the third scene as the British in their confusion at being driven back have dispatched Sherwin to Boston to ask for reinforcements. For an answer Gage turns the matter over to Burgoyne as the governor seeks refuge in hiding.

Scene four depicts the death of General Warren. The stage directions indicate that perhaps tableau stance may have been employed:

Mortally wounded, falling on his right knee, covering his right breast with his right hand, and supporting himself with his firelock in his left.¹⁰

The kneeling general pleads with his countrymen to continue the struggle for freedom and asks that they do not weep because in dying he achieves immortality. He envisions heavenly citizens who have fought bravely for truth on earth. The

⁹The corner stone for the Bunker Hill Monument was laid June 17, 1825. At this ceremony, Daniel Webster gave the first "Bunker's Hill Oration," one of the greatest occasional speeches delivered in the first half of the nineteenth century. Brackenridge did not live to see his prophecy come true.

¹⁰ Hugh Henry Brackenridge, The Battle of Bunkers-Hill, by a Gentleman of Maryland (Philadelphia, 1776), p. 28. All future citations from this work will be abbreviated B.B.H.

The frontispiece of the play is an engraving of Warren in genuflection. This pose, descendent from hagiographic illustrations, was in vogue for heroes by artists of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Ernest Short, A History of British Painting (London, 1953), pp. 149-50.

Richard Morris, et al. The Life History of the United States 1775-1789 (New York, 1963), p. 9, quotes Warren as saying, "These fellows say we won't fight; by heavens, I hope I shall die up to my knees in blood!" The pose may be an attempt to fulfill a prophecy.

celestial music blends with a terrestrial tattoo as Warren died proclaiming liberty.

The fifth scene shifts to Charlestown where the British have ordered the town burned to provide a smokescreen to cover a rally of their forces. The arrival of reinforcements under Clinton promises that the taking of the hill will be an easy task. The sixth scene consists of an exhortation by Gardiner to his men defending Bunkers Hill. He reiterates that the American reason for fighting is to prevent civil death and tells them that the English who have been so long victorious are repulsed. In informing the army that Warren has fallen, he urges the men to avenge the hero's death. The exordium ends with the leitmotif that God is on the side of the colonists. Scene seven consists of Howe's attempt to rally the fleeing British troops with denunciations of their cowardice, and citing past laurels which Englishmen have won on foreign soil. To insure their fighting, Howe sends a group of officers to the rear with sword and bayonet to deal with laggards. The fighters for the infant country are not afraid to sacrifice as scene eight shows quite vividly in the attitude of General Gardiner. Wounded in the groin by a musket ball, Gardiner announces from his stretcher that he hopes the surgeon can stanch the bleeding to enable him to return to fight. The wounded man can die peacefully and surrender his spirit only if he has given maximum effort to the glorious

cause. In scene nine Putnam directs a final charge and employs the motives of honor and vengeance to spur his men to litter the field with corpses of their enemy.

As the last scene opens, with a young British officer proclaiming victory, Generals Howe, Clinton and Lord Pigot enter to bemoan the fifteen hundred British casualties that were the price of winning the battle. Howe marvels at the persistence the American foe has displayed resulting in a carnage which Clinton compares to the wastes of Sodom and Gomorrah. Pigot, in lamenting the losses of Abercrombie, Pitcairn, and Sherwin,¹¹ estimates that American ferocity is ultimately unconquerable. Howe acknowledges the colonials' bravery but attributes their courage to their British ancestry; he praises the dead Warren whom they will honorably inter because of his valiant fighting. Burgoyne closes the drama with a description of what he has seen from Boston, giving a panoramic view of the spectacle which objectifies the bloody events that have just occurred. His treatment is historical rather than immediate; thus the summation serves to place the whole action at the distance of historical observation.

The epilogue by a "Gentleman of the Army," i.e., John Parke, is spoken by Putnam's aide-de-camp, Lieutenant Colonel

¹¹Sherwin is the only British officer whom we meet on stage who dies in battle. He functions as a representative of enemy fatality, and by keeping his part the shortest in the play, we cannot develop sympathy for him.

Webb. The predictable heroic couplets mourn the severe losses and proclaim Bunkers Hill an honorable defeat which wounded Britain severely. The epilogue climaxes in an emotional criticism of the pagan behavior of a supposedly Christian nation:

Breathless and naked on th' ensanguin'd plain,
 Midst friends and brothers, sons and fathers slain.
 No pitying hand his languid eyes to close,
 He breathes his last amidst insulting foes;
 His body plunder'd, massacred, abus'd;
 By Christians-Christian fun'ral rites refus'd-
 Thrown as a carrion in the public way,
 To Dogs, to Britons, and to Birds a prey.¹²

The remainder of the epilogue consists of a reminder to the colonials that the battle must go on until tyranny is defeated. The final couplet reminds the revolutionaries that those who fight for freedom fight "the cause of HEAV'N."

Although there is no mention in contemporary accounts or in modern criticism of "An Ode on the Battle of Bunkers-Hill, Sung and Acted by a Soldier in a Military Habit, with his Firelock, etc.," which was published with the play, it is reasonable to assume that these verses, which the author states are "In the same Measure with a Sea Piece, Entitled the Tempest," were performed as an afterpiece. The mention of the costume and the property, as well as the acknowledgment of the musical accompaniment, indicates that the "Ode" was part of the performance. The inclusion of musical numbers

¹²B.B.H., p. 38.

in the ballad opera tradition which were thematically related to the main piece was standard procedure during the late eighteenth century.

The "Ode," written in a preponderance of trochaic tetrameter with alternating catalectic lines, not only gives dogmatic finality associated with common meter, but a spirited martial force as well. Each verse begins with an exhortation to bravery and ends with a "quotation" of a leader's words to his men. The first verse depicts the men fighting, commanded by Warren. The second describes heavier fighting as cannon smoke envelopes the hill; Warren leads the charge. The third stanza proclaims that the British are falling in great numbers, and Gardiner and the right flank prove themselves. The fourth verse tells of the turning of the battle. The fifth speaks of the tears of the observers witnessing the defeat who insist there is still more "blood to spill" although their ammunition is gone. The final stanza commemorates the field where the dead are lying, and Putnam sadly admits that surrender is inevitable, but that there shall be future victories:

Come my vet'rans, we must yield;
More equal match'd, we'll yet charge bolder,
For the present quit the field.
The God of battles shall revisit,
On their heads each soul that dies,
Take courage boys, we yet shan't miss it,
From a thousand victories.¹³

¹³"Ode," B.B.H., p. 44.

It was Brackenridge's purpose to write an inspiring entertainment of the patriot valor which proved that the pastoral militias defending their country were superior to the formally trained British army. This great slaughter of the American Revolution was one of the most dramatic battles of the war and one which had far-reaching consequences, particularly as a morale builder. General Howe, who believed the colonists were greenhorns before Bunkers Hill, changed his strategy for the remainder of the Revolution. He never again ordered a full frontal attack after losing almost one-third of his total command of three thousand five hundred men.¹⁴

Although a complete account of the historical battle is beyond the scope of this dissertation, a brief resume of the events which occurred on the one hundred ten foot eminence in the Charlestown district of Boston, June 17, 1775, is helpful in understanding the drama.¹⁵ Bunkers Hill is connected by a seventy-five foot ridge to Breeds Hill. The fighting began when Howe realized that the colonists had crept in from Cambridge and encamped on Breeds Hill on June 16. By the morning of the battle the Americans had built a redoubt of earth against a rail fence and fortified the works with stone. When they saw the wall, the British began with a cannonade.

¹⁴John Hyde Preston, A Short History of the American Revolution (New York, 1953), p. 74.

¹⁵G. E. Ellis, The History of the Battle of Bunker's (Breed's) Hill (Philadelphia, 1875), and Peter Frothingham, The Siege of Boston (Boston, 1902), give full accounts of the battle.

The cannon was for the most part ineffective because of the distance. The Americans did not answer the shots, which frustrated the attackers. In the afternoon the British landed troops from the men-of-war in the harbor, and the redcoats lined in formation in front of the fortified hill. Breeds Hill, which is joined to the mainland by a narrow neck of earth, could easily have been taken had the troops been landed behind the colonists' breastworks, for then the fortification would have been useless. Howe followed the formal frontal plan even as he had at Lexington. Israel Putnam is reputed to have told the men to hold their fire until they saw the whites of British eyes. When the line of soldiers was within fifteen yards of the entrenchment, the Americans fired a devastating volley. The British led repeated charges at the breastworks, forcing their men to certain death.

By the third major assault the Americans were low on powder. The colonists could have retreated across Charlestown Neck, but determined to stay and face certain death. The colonists fought hand to hand, but the British, who had regrouped into columns, overwhelmed them by sheer numbers. Howe sent a cross-fire through the remaining ranks, then ordered a cease fire. Clinton wished him to pursue the few who managed to escape, but Howe was content with taking the position and did not go after those who managed to retreat.

Brackenridge's purpose to encourage patriotism explains a number of the discrepancies between the drama and the actual

battle, chief of which are the ideological basis for British cowardice and the omission of Colonel William Prescott, actual leader of the "700" men. To foster the national spirit through his play about the events at Bunkers Hill, Brackenridge had to employ a certain selectivity and discretion. Therefore, those events and characters that depicted the American fight for liberty against oppressive British tyranny became the vital essence of the whole drama. The structure of the drama underscores this purpose by contrasting the opposing forces in a series of parallel devices from the exposition through the denouement. The first act sets the scene of the action and provides a milieu, the spirit of which is libertarian. Warren, manifestly the hero, Putnam, the tactician, and Gardiner, a combination of the two, expound on the plight of starving Boston, the perfidy of the royal governor, General Gage, the glory of Lexington, and the will to fight for the principles that could not be gained through legal channels. Warren states the British estimation of the American delay in trying to rescue Boston:

Say noble PUTNAM, shall we hear of this,
And let our idle swords rust in the sheath,
While slaves of Royal Power impeach our worth
As vain, and call our patience cowardice?¹⁶

Warren also voices the leitmotif of God is on our side and realizing the overwhelming odds, he injects the concept of the title page, "Tis glorious to die in Battle." Although Warren

¹⁶B.B.H., p. 6.

actually entered the battle later, Brackenridge has all three men present to discuss the plans to give a sense of immediacy to the impending battle. In showing us three men of the different colonies, Brackenridge is able to divorce the action from any particular colonial identity and have the battle strictly American. The seven hundred men chosen to fortify the heights appear as a conglomerate of the colonies' bravest rather than the Massachusetts contingent they in fact were.

Enthusiasm for the forthcoming battle contrasts to British diffidence which English leaders manifest in the second act as they meet in Gage's Boston headquarters. Burgoyne disdains to engage a "herd;" Howe remembers their soldiery as true sons of Britain in the recent colonial wars and their reverence for the fallen body of his brother; Gage still has the rout of British troops at Lexington on his mind. The desultory attitude of the militarily superior side serves as a complicating factor which functions as an exciting force, for lack of interest on the part of the British may prove decisive in the battle about to be waged. This drawing of attitudes provides a picture of the values involved in the struggle which approaches a metaphysical duality of good and evil. In distinctly American fashion, Brackenridge equates the good with the new and the bad with the old or traditional. Here the parallels become evident. All three are leaders, but Gage the oath-breaker contrasts with Warren the noble hero;

Howe the valiant warrior parallels the valiant Putnam. Although Burgoyne's villany also contrasts with Warren's heroism, there is no parallel role or contrast with Gardiner whose personality is a compound of his compatriots until his final appearances. Motivation for the fighting presents a sharp contrast; Warren feels his men can sweep down on the British like the avenging angels of the lord; Gage, not too sure of his troops, gives the word to offer booty as an incentive. Through these parallel acts Brackenridge presents each side, its leaders, its attitudes, and ideologies in vivid contrast to the other. The American setting, a plain "Camp," is offset by the urban war council setting at "Boston." This further reinforces the polarity of the spartan and the effete that mark the New and Old World cultures. These short expository acts demonstrate an economy of means allied with a richness of effect that enhance the dramatic as well as rhetorical aspects.

The third act, which initiates the action, points to colonial bravery and intimates that even in defeat and death Americans will be morally victorious. In any war, victory is decided by the men who actually do the fighting. It was therefore necessary to make some token appearance of the men who would actually engage in the combat. Showing the American fighting men first is good logic as well as good drama, but the scene itself is less than inspirational. Gardiner's speech is a mere echo of the sentiments expressed in act one,

rather than a stirring rallying cry that would fire the men to the brave deeds recounted later. Had the character of Gardiner been established as a leader rather than the reflector he is in the first act, the personality of the man could have invested this incident with dramatic intensity. Since Brackenridge chose to alter history by omitting Prescott, the fiery, colorful Putnam would have provided an excellent substitute. For this act, Brackenridge failed to exploit the dramatic potential.

The fourth act amplifies the characters presented in act two, shows British reaction to the American offensive, and presents the British action. Gage's soliloquy opening scene one parallels Warren's first speech of the play, showing that he feels deeply the plight of the starving people of Boston and the uncomplimentary epithets of the Americans. Whereas the hero Warren will fight to release the innocents of conflict, Gage, tormented by guilt and doubt, relies on the "cause of kings" to justify his far from humanitarian action. He lacks the moral strength to release the captives or open the city to negotiate in his capacity as governor. Burgoyne's disgust for the rabble has intensified with news of their offensive. His aristocratic mind cannot absorb the idea of revolt by the masses. Howe reacts as would the professional: a job must be done; he prepares to do it. The closing soliloquy of Gage shows the deterioration of a petty tyrant by revealing his fear of death. Brackenridge avoids any

bathos by having Gage recount his fears in the form of a dream which has haunted him since he was a child. This segment shows the dramatist's skill in revealing the innate cowardice of General Gage, preparing us for his final act of infamy, and removing any sympathy for the tormented man by showing how drink has befuddled his memory and mind:

Eternity, is like a winding sheet--
 The seven commandments like-I think there's seven,--
 I scratch my head-but yet in vain I scratch--
 O BUTE, and DARTMOUTH knew ye what I feel,
 You sure would pity, an old drinking man,¹⁷
 That has more heart-ake, than philosophy.

Howe's second scene is a necessary piece of stage business for this play, showing him urging his men to battle, the trained troops who will put down the rebellion. His speech parallels that of Gardiner's in the preceding act, citing the reason for the fight and giving the motivation for victory. Where Gardiner had cited personal honor and valor, Howe cites "loyalty to the cause of Kings to chastise this rebellion." Where Gardiner emphasizes death and a hero's reward, Howe emphasizes life and the confiscated property of the traitors that the victorious British will divide.¹⁸ However, Howe's invoking the love of mother country and castigating the rebels for their "foul ingratitude" finds no parallel in Gardiner's speech which omits mention of tyranny or loss or rights. Where Howe recites a few pages from

¹⁷B.B.H., p. 20.

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 21-22.

victories to inspire his men, we find no mention in Gardiner of the recent American victory at Lexington. Having inspired his men with thoughts of cause, country, and property, Howe climaxes his exhortation with the ringing: "The word,/ Is GEORGE our sov'reign, and BRITANNIA'S arms."¹⁹ This scene, one of the most effective in the play, shows Brackenridge's awareness of the dramatic possibilities in a dedicated man urging his troops to battle. It is unfortunate that Gardiner's scene did not manifest this awareness.

The last act opens with an inspirational speech by Warren which counters Howe's exhortations. The old cause is that of kings, the new is that of liberty. The British fight for booty; the Americans struggle for their land. The English do battle to preserve tradition; the Americans fight against injustices. Howe had insisted that all progress in the colonies was the direct result of British policy; Warren recounts the settlers' battle to obtain a foothold in the new land and capsules the abuses the British government has imposed on the colonies. British victories are matched with British savagry:

Remember march, brave countrymen, that day
When BOSTON'S streets ran blood--Think on that day,
And let the memory, to revenge, stir up,
The temper of your souls.²⁰

He ends his speech in a climax matching Howe's, summing up the two ideologies and the men who fight in their cause: "The

¹⁹Ibid., p. 22.

²⁰Ibid., p. 24.

word is LIBERTY,/ and Heaven smile on us, in so just a cause."²¹ Howe and Warren's speeches to their troops are two of the high points in the play and show in their directness, simplicity, and matching of ideals Brackenridge's developing sense for dramatic presentation.

While the second scene, showing Gardiner with his men, reinforces the lofty sentiments of Warren, the emphasis is on the more practical considerations. Gardiner notes the chilling alternatives to resistance: leaving their homes, living with the Indians, or staying on in ignoble slavery. By including these considerations, Brackenridge tacitly acknowledges that heroism for the average man is a compound of many motives, pragmatic as well as idealistic. This gives more credence to the Americans' persistence. Gardiner's closing reassurance of fame for those who die in so just a cause prepares us for the death scene that will follow.

Having shown two short direct scenes of the American army, the play quickly shifts to the British side where news of the setbacks has reached Gage. The deterioration of the governor-general is now complete as he puts the burden for continuing on Burgoyne. The character of the latter is reinforced as he dispatches Clinton rather than himself to fight the insolent foe or taste of the blood that foe now sheds. Such heady patriotic sentiments expressed by the American

²¹Ibid.

generals needed the relief afforded by this glimpse into the enemy camp. However, Brackenridge wisely chose to show the less than admirable Gage and the despicable Burgoyne rather than the sincere, dedicated Howe. By fixing these two more or less secure in Boston, Brackenridge is now free to concentrate on the actual battle.

Lexington involved local militias; Bunkers Hill raised the level of resistance to a national scale by engaging the men of several colonies. Warren, a casualty of that encounter, thus became the first national hero. Having presented the character of a sensitive, intelligent man who loved life and family, but liberty more, portraying the death of this first American martyr becomes imperative. Sympathy and admiration has been built up for the man who in his death urges his men to continue. Dramatizing Warren's last words rather than referring to his brave death in some other character's narrative summary serves Brackenridge's patriotic purpose and provides a climactic moment in the play. The moment could have been one of inspiration, but the excessive length which dwells on concepts already sufficiently stressed in the preceding acts devitalizes the speech. Had the forty-seven lines been compressed to fifteen, Warren's legacy of the sacred cause of liberty, his insistence that his men rejoice in his immortality in death and his final stirring injunction, "Fight on my countrymen, be free, be free,"²²

²²Ibid., p. 29.

the scene would have had the emotional and dramatic impact possible in such an exhortation, a desired effect whether for stage or school presentation. Although Brackenridge chose the correct incident, he had not yet developed the skill necessary for such an admittedly difficult presentation.

With Warren's death the drama begins its downward sweep. The next four scenes, alternating between Howe and Gardiner, show the effects the battle will have upon the spirit of the two sides. In scene five, the British troops have been repulsed. With an oath, Howe forsakes the call to Britannia and George and tries instead to expunge the loss at Lexington by a victory at Bunkers Hill. Gardiner in the next scene, can still cite the injustices of slavery and civil death in conjunction with the death of Warren to spur the men on in the cause of God and liberty. Scene seven shows the harrassed Howe after the second repulse, still urging his soldiers to fight. After citing their glorious fighting traditions, he castigates them for their cowardice, sending officers to the rear to insure the men will push forward. Scene eight, with Gardiner mortally wounded, provides one of the most ironic contrasts of the drama. Howe has twice been forced to goad his troops, although superior in numbers, training, and equipment, with appeals to their pride, then with promises of booty, and finally with threats to deal with their cowardice. Gardiner, faced with the death of Warren, capitalizes on it and urges his men on. Upon his own wounding, with death perhaps

imminent, Gardiner still wishes to fight and begs his men to bring him to the surgeon so that he may purchase one half hour of life to fight more. Since the actual battle could not be presented, the effects of the two American repulses of the British revealed through the changing relationship of Howe with his troops is excellent theater. Brackenridge capitalizes on the impossible feat of the Americans beating back the British and softens the British victory by turning the battle into a moral triumph. Howe's pleadings, urgings, wheedling, and threatening of his troops, and the interplay of the exhortations of Gardiner to the American troops after each of Howe's scenes function as an incremental castigation of the enemy and provide swift movement toward the conclusion of the drama.

The last two scenes, a fitting panegyric to the valiant men, serve as the denouement. Putnam, the soldier, encourages the men to continue although defeat is imminent. Putnam's plea to the troops serves as Brackenridge's to the colonists: "In spite of temporary setbacks, we must continue in the fight to regain our liberty." This scene shows Brackenridge's dramatic sense in choosing Putnam to remain to fight and keeping the scene brief, but full of impact. The final scene confirms the British attitude toward the cause of the colonies. Although Richardson proudly trumpets, "The day is ours, huzza, the day is ours,/ This last attack has forc'd them to retreat,"²³

²³Ibid., p. 33.

the rest of the scene is a negation of any victory over the spirits of the colonials. Clinton notes the horrible carnage, the pyrrhic victory; Lord Pigot actually forecasts the outcome of the struggle; "Not the united forces of the world,/ Could master them, and the proud rage subdue/ Of these AMERICANS."²⁴ He is the first British officer to pronounce the character of the battles to ensue, Britain against the united Americans. Howe caps Pigot's tribute to the Americans by the highest, and deserved, praise he can tender:

E'en in an enemy I honour worth,
And valour eminent. The vanquish'd foe,
In feats of prowess shew their ancestry,
And speak their birth legitimate;
The sons of Britons, with the genuine flame,
Of British heat, and valour in their veins.²⁵

With the same reverence he recollected the colonists had shown to his slain brother, he promises that the hero Warren will receive the hero's burial he deserves. Yet his speech is tinged with regret that so noble a foe should have spent itself in such a fantastic cause. The British general can admire bravery, but still cannot tolerate treason. Burgoyne's speech ends the drama on a realistic note. The impetuous foe has remained so in his estimation. His account of the battle is not in terms of individual bravery or sacred honor but in

²⁴Ibid., p. 34.

²⁵Ibid., p. 35.

abstract classical terms that rob the colonial effort of immediacy and relevance.

The hill itself, like Ida's burning mount,
When Jove came down, in terrors, to dismay
The Grecian host, enshrowded in thick flames;
And round its margin, to the ebbing wave,
A town on fire, and rushing from its base
With ruin hideous, and combustion down.²⁶

His qualified observance of the wreckage wrought by the colonials implies that in future battle the British will not suffer such losses:

A scene like which, perhaps, no time shall know,
"Till heav'n with final ruin fires the ball,
Burns up the cities, and the works of men,
And wraps the mountains in one gen'ral blaze.²⁷

Ending the drama with the various views of the British toward the rebel colonies, disapproving in spite of the valor displayed, serves the patriotic as well as the dramatic purpose. The defeat is not as much a catastrophe as a rallying cry. The Americans have gained in self-knowledge and esteem through the losses they were able to inflict. More importantly, the knowledge that their foe remains adamant in its opposition to the cause despite the losses suffered and the united colonial effort erases any false hopes for other than a peaceful settlement.

Using the five act dramatic form, Brackenridge exerts a much tighter control than was shown in the first dramatic ode The Rising Glory of America. His exposition is compressed into two short acts, presenting the characters, the ideals,

²⁶Ibid., p. 36.

²⁷Ibid.

and the history which have evolved into the present need for decisive action. His subject matter for the rising action, the American initiative, is logical although he does not exploit the full dramatic potential of the scene. Act four, the corollary to act three, is fully developed and far superior to the action of its predecessor. This parallel act ends on the high note prior to battle, with the British rallying cry of the cause of King George and the British empire. Howe's Lear-like imprecations of the colonials' ingratitude are particularly well integrated and produce a dramatic effect. Overall, the material and pace of the last act present the many facets of the struggle, historic and personal, carefully balanced by parallel scenes and rhetorical exposition. Warren's death scene in terms of the play would be good theater, but its length and overemphasis of theme detract from an otherwise promising idea. However, the careful balance of rhetoric and parallel scenes through the rest of the act overshadows this deficiency. Warren's rallying cry of the just cause of liberty links this act to the cry of Howe in act four. Gardiner's scene following presages the death of the hero. The next scene in Boston which shows Gage's final deterioration and Burgoyne's persistent antipathy to the rebel herd neatly balances the admirable sentiments of the American encounters and focuses attention on the battle. The drama's falling action which shows the effect of the temporary American successes on Howe, alternated with Gardiner's

dedication and persistence in face of defeat, demonstrates Brackenridge's growing dramatic skill in sustaining tension. Scene nine with its brief panegyric from Putnam shows the dramatic consciousness Brackenridge is developing. The sentiments of Putnam were shared by most of the colonials. Saving the greatest praise of American bravery for Howe to voice in the last scene emphasizes the potential for freedom present in a united colonial effort. This unusual twist of praise for the enemy from the most respected British general tempered by the scorn that another leader still feels in spite of American bravery reinforces the moral victory while indicating the difficult path ahead for the colonists. In stressing the significance of the "failure," moral victory, consolidation of disparate forces under one command and cause, and the ability to inflict heavy losses on the enemy, Brackenridge inspires hope for the future.

The choice of characters is also subordinate to the patriotic purpose, requiring the presentation of a united colonial effort through the American leaders: General Warren from Massachusetts, General Putnam from Connecticut, and General Gardiner, not identified with any militia. Since the use of subordinate officers, such as Colonel William Prescott of Massachusetts, would emphasize a particular militia, Brackenridge transcended colonial jealousies by having the three generals combine as an "allied command" to fight with their "brave countrymen." Through Warren, the dramatist

implemented his theme of honor in death for his country. All colonials could identify with this noble family man, who put freedom before security, and share vicariously in his honor. Putnam represents the tactician, the skilled soldier, pragmatic in outlook, cunning in his strategy. Gardiner instead of Prescott leads the "gallant men" to fortify the hill, thus extending the incredible feats of the Massachusetts militia to the credit of the entire American force. Gardiner becomes wounded, his fate undetermined; Putnam the last of the three Americans on stage, remains to praise Warren's glorious triumph and to prepare for the further conflicts that will ensue. The trio illustrates the three fates open to those who fight: death, wounding, and surviving unscathed to continue the battle another time.

To portray the opposition, hated representatives of an oppressive tyranny, Gage's presence was mandatory. It was his action as royal governor, jailing the patriots that gave up their arms in spite of his promise, that brought on the siege of Boston and eventually the action of Bunkers Hill. Gage's arrival with his troops in Boston represented only a threat. His severe enforcement of the Intolerable Acts and his conduct as governor, tool of tyranny, spread his infamy far beyond the confines of the colony. General Howe is Putnam's opposite number, a dedicated, professional soldier concerned with doing his assigned task and possessing the required military skills. With Burgoyne, more "gentleman"

than soldier, Brackenridge presents a decadent Old World order venting its hatred on the insolence of the New World no longer in subservience. Pigot and Clinton's appearance at the close of the drama allow them to act as disinterested observers who, not identified with the strong views expressed by their superiors in the beginning, can as British officers praise the indomitable spirit of the Americans which allowed them to withstand the numerically superior British forces.

When the characters in a play are historical person-ages, there is a temptation to criticize the accuracy of the characterization on the basis of the prototypes' biographies. However, this criterion is dubious because of the constrictions it places on a drama, particularly when a play is polemic. Brackenridge does include some traits of the military men who fought at Bunkers Hill. In his appearances, Joseph Warren manifests the sensibility suited to a man who was esteemed as a philosopher, probably because a copy of Locke was found on his body after he was killed in the final conflict near Prescott's redoubt. Warren's concern for the parents grieving for their sons languishing in jail under Gage's command and the starving infants of besieged Boston opens the play; his concern for these unfortunate civilians thrust by events to share the soldiers' portion of deprivation closes the act. To incite the men to prolong the fighting, he conjures up the picture of war's unfortunates: "There [Boston] might we still,/ On terms precarious and disdainful liv'd,/ With daughters

ravished, and butcher'd sons."²⁸ In his death speech, the general asks that no tears be shed for him; he then speaks tenderly of his family, "Five virgin daughters young, and unendow'd,/ Now with the foe left lone and fatherless."²⁹ Warren, who practiced medicine and wrote several political tracts and articles, speaks persuasively as a statesman in capsuling the injustices suffered by the colonies, injustices later amplified in the Declaration of Independence:

Our noble ancestors,
 Out brav'd the tempests, of the hoary deep,
 And on these hills, uncultivate, and wild,
 Sought an asylum, from despotic sway;
 A short asylum, for that envious power,
 With persecution dire, still follows us.
 At first, they deem'd our charters forfeited.
 Next, our just rights, in government, abridg'd.
 Then, thrust in viceroys, and bashaws, to rule,
 With lawless sovereignty, Now added force,
 Of standing armies, to secure their sway.³⁰

The sentimental and dramatic death speech of Warren is consonant with Webster's description of this patriot in his Bunkers Hill Oration as "the first great martyr in this cause." The dedication and sensitivity which Warren manifests are qualities attributed to him by contemporaries.³¹

The practical problems of logistics are more the

²⁸Ibid., p. 24.

²⁹Ibid., p. 29.

³⁰Ibid., p. 23.

³¹Peter Frothingham, The Life and Times of Joseph Warren (New York, 1865), p. 49, cites a British soldier's report of Warren who died "in his best . . . Everybody remembered his fine silk fringed waistcoat."

concern of Israel Putnam, which is in keeping with what is known of the man who may have been responsible for this fight:

Now from our troops
Seven hundred gallant men, and skill'd in arms,
With speed select, choice spirits of the war.
By you, led on brave, GARD'NER, to the heights,
E're yet the morn, with drawing light breaks forth,
Intrench on Bunkers Hill, and when the day,
First, o'er the hill top rises, we shall join
United arms, against the assailing foe,
Should they attempt to cross the narrow tide,
In deep battalion to regain the hill.³²

More the soldier than Warren, Putnam facing defeat emphasizes not the hero's death but the American potential for carnage before the last shot is fired. "And if at last we yield,/ Leave many a death, amidst their hollow ranks,/ To damp the measure, of their dear bought joy."³³ Howe, his counterpart, praises Putnam's leadership in England's colonial wars. This British respect stems from his company command in Abercrombie's army. Two years after he received his commission, in 1758, Putnam became aide-de-camp to Abercrombie when Howe's brother was shot. This close association with battlefield casualties is reflected in Putnam's calm acceptance of Warren's death, which he uses to spur on his men.

Putnam has been demythologized by recent historians who see him as a blustery leader ignorant of military science. His reputation seems to have been created by stories of his

³²Ibid., pp. 9-10.

³³Ibid., p. 32.

legendary exploits, many of which, such as leaving his plow Cincinnatus-like to fight at Bunkers Hill,³⁴ are probably the products of Putnam's own "press agenting." Whether Putnam said, "Hold fire! Wait until you can see the whites of their eyes. Then up - and tear out their bellies! Shoot at their belts, God damn 'em"³⁵ is not as important as the supposition supported by a number of historians that Putnam rather than Colonel William Prescott was chief of the Bunkers Hill action. Putnam's insistence upon making every shot count, as Brackenridge draws him, would make his strategy a decisive factor in the show of colonial strength which made Bunkers Hill militarily memorable. Instead of casting Putnam as a nearly illiterate farmer, Brackenridge depicts Putnam as a soldier whose feats in the French and Indian War won him the respect of both sides because of his imagination, skill, and love of a fight.

Gardiner was a minor Revolutionary figure about whom little is known. It may be because of this obscurity that Brackenridge felt free to use him to reflect and endorse the noble sentiments of Warren and to carry out the direct orders of Putnam. His second and last speech of the first act is a composite of the sacred cause and eagerness for action shown

³⁴John Ober, Old Put, the Patriot (New York, 1904), p. 115.

³⁵Ibid.

by his comrades:

The thought is perilous, and many men,
In this bold enterprise, must strew the ground.
But since we combat in the cause of God,
I draw my sword, not shall the sheath again
Receive the shining blade, till on the heights,
Of CHARLES-TOWN, and BUNKER'S pleasant HILL,³⁶
It drinks the blood of many a warrior slain.

His next two brief appearances, as head of the seven hundred men, show the same mixture. Only in his last two scenes, angered by Warren's death then struck by a musket ball, does he emerge as the avenging adversary:

Bear me soldiers to that hollow-space,
A little hence, just in the hill's decline.
A surgeon there, may stop the gushing wound,
And gain a short respite to life, that yet
I may return, and fight one half hour more.³⁷

Thomas Gage, who entered the army at the age of twenty, serving in Flanders, in General Braddock's expedition in North America, rose at the age of forty-two to the important and influential post of commander-in-chief of the British forces in North America. Made royal governor of Massachusetts in 1774, he was responsible for enforcing those parts of the Intolerable Acts applicable to that colony; his treatment of armed resisters earned him the hatred expressed by Warren as "perfidious man."³⁸ In his dual positions, Gage could not be expected to personally lead the assault against a "mob of

³⁶B.B.H., p. 10.

³⁷Ibid., p. 31.

³⁸Ibid., p. 6.

colonials." However, Brackenridge to suit his purpose of presenting a hated foe chose to attribute his staying in Boston to cowardice, a view not shared by England, who although recalling him after the battle, promoted him to full general in 1781. Although Gage acknowledges the Americans' strength and courage before battle, he is confident when conferring on the battle plans that English discipline will triumph. But he is a rule book soldier rather than a strategist. In portraying the general who insisted upon employing European military tactics which were useless in the colonies,³⁹ Brackenridge chose apt qualities to show this general's stubborn demeanor. It is Gage who conservatively follows the advice of frontal assault recommended by General Haldimand, who had acted as commander-in-chief while Gage was in England on leave the year before Bunkers Hill. Fighting pangs of guilt for his broken oath to release the prisoners, Gage ascribes his action as necessary to support the royal cause:

When the mighty cause,
Of GEORGE and BRITAIN, is endangered.
For nobly struggling, in the cause of kings,
We claim the high, the just prerogative,
To rule mankind, and with an iron rod,
Exact submission, due, tho' absolute.
What tho' they stile me, villain, murderer,
And imprecate from heaven, dire thunderbolts,
To crush my purposes.⁴⁰

³⁹Richard B. Morris, The Making of a Nation (New York, 1963), II, p. 9.

⁴⁰B.B.H., pp. 17-18.

Faced with unexpected losses from stiff colonial resistance, Gage, instead of accommodating his tactics to match the rude American assault, places the burden for revision on Burgoyne: "Do as you please Burgoyne in this affair,/ I'll hide myself in some deep vault beneath."⁴¹

Brackenridge's Howe faithfully portrays the professional soldier of his real life counterpart, dedicated to corps, country and king. His keen appraisal of the enemy's background and motivation is most accurate:

A people brave,
Who never yet, of luxury, or soft
Delights, effeminate, and false, have tasted.
But through hate of chains, and slavr'y, suppos'd,
Forsake their mountain tops, and rush to arms.⁴²

Although he is anxious to crush the "insurrection," he grieves to draw his sword against those who gained esteem as valiant British fighting men:

Oft have I heard their valour, published:
Their perseverance, and untameable
Fierce mind, when late they fought with us, and drove,
The French encroaching on their settlements,
Back to their frozen lakes. Or when with us
On Cape Breton, they stormed Louisburg:
With us in Canada, they took Quebec;
And at the Havannah, these NEW-ENGLAND MEN,
Led on by PUTNAM, acted valiantly.⁴³

This bravery, so recently displayed at Lexington, rankles the

⁴¹Ibid., p. 27.

⁴²Ibid., p. 12.

⁴³Ibid., pp. 12-13.

commander of his trained corps and acts as a spur to expunge this blot from his record: "Let's on, and wipe the day of LEXINGTON,/ Thus soiled, quite from our soldiers memories."⁴⁴ Death would be preferable to ridicule of his men. Howe also reflects his deep commitment to fight for his king and country, urging his men to fight for "British glory, and the cause of kings."⁴⁵ General Howe was the real strategist of the English army, later capturing New York and Philadelphia. Despite his connoisseurship of women and food,⁴⁶ Howe showed competence as a tactician. Of all the British generals in the play, Howe is more finely drawn than the stodgy Gage or "Gentleman Johnny" Burgoyne.

Said to have sufficient wit to charm his monarch, Burgoyne possesses none of such requisite dash in The Battle of Bunkers-Hill. He castigates the American rabble for their insolence in daring to challenge the better trained British soldiers and urges quick action to obliterate the annoyance.

How long brave gen'als, shall the rebel foe,
In vain arrangements, and mock siege, display,
Their haughty insolence? -- Shall in this town,
So many thousands, of BRITANNIA'S troops,
With watch incessant, and sore toil oppress'd,

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 13.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 19. He restates this motive throughout his speeches, viz., pp. 21, 22.

⁴⁶A colonial song capsules the popular estimation of Sir William Howe: "Awake, arouse, Sir Billy,/ There's forage in the plan./ Ah, leave your little Filly,/ And open the campaign./ Have not a woman's prattle,/ Which tickles in the ear,/ But give the word for battle/ And grasp the warlike spear."

Remain besieged? A vetr'an army pent,
 In the inclosure, of so small a space,
 By a disorder'd herd, untaught, unofferer'd.⁴⁷

The general is imperious, superficial, and snobbish about
 engaging with peasants:

Our glasses mark, but one small regiment there,
 Yet ev'ry hour we languish in delay,
 Inspires fresh hope, and fills their pig'my souls,
 With thoughts of holding it.⁴⁸

Burgoyne, who joined Gage at Boston, did witness the battle
 from a distance, after which the man who was a better drama-
 tist than general⁴⁹ wrote an animated description of the
 fight. The Orderly Book of Lieutenant General John Burgoyne
 (Albany, 1860), as were other British eye-witness accounts of
 the battle by participants possessed of military knowledge,
 was published after Brackenridge's play appeared.⁵⁰

Sir Henry Clinton functions only as a narrator to
 stress succinctly the carnage wrought by the Americans in
 terms which reinforce the divine assistance motif: "Seemed
 not the agency, of mortal men,/ But heaven itself, with
 snares, and vengeance arm'd,/ T'oppose our gaining it."⁵¹

⁴⁷B.B.H., pp. 10-11.

⁴⁸Ibid., pp. 18-19.

⁴⁹Burgoyne's The Blockade, a farce ridiculing the
 patriot army then blockading the city, was performed in Boston
 in the winter of 1775-76. His most successful play, The
Heiress, appeared in London in 1786.

⁵⁰Sir William Howe, The Narrative of Lieutenant General
Sir William Howe in a Committee of the House of Commons, etc.
 (London, 1780). General Sir William Howe's Orderly Book 1775-
76, ed. B. F. Stevens (London, 1890).

⁵¹B.B.H., pp. 33-34.

Lord Pigot, Commander of the British left at Bunkers Hill, echoes the catalogue of casualties and prepares the way for Howe's final tribute by wondering at "the proud rage" of "these Americans."⁵²

Because Brackenridge's purpose is to portray the underlying causes of American unrest and the effect of a dedicated band's united effort, full representation of the actual participants is not his prime concern. Yet each character exhibits at least one main trait of the historical personage: Warren's sensibility and judicious view of the issue, Putnam's fighting spirit and skill, the wounded Gardiner's perseverance, Gage's iron rule and perfidy, Howe's professionalism and loyalty to his oath of service, Burgoyne's snob-bishness. These distinctive traits indicate that the author made a conscious effort to portray the real person by including the characteristics and some aspect of the careers of those men whose names comprise the Dramatis Personae.

Since the dramatist's main concern is the values involved in the short, concerted action that was Bunkers Hill, development of dramatic action rather than characterization is his prime consideration. Thus to subserve the action and theme the characters are presented rather than developed. Gardiner, on the American side, does not remain static. He emerges from a reflector of Warren's noble sentiments and

⁵²Ibid., p. 34.

Putnam's eagerness to battle into an individual whose lofty feelings are finally submerged by a desire to avenge Warren's death. After his wounding, he becomes more militant than Putnam, desiring not the noble concept of a hero's death but more practically additional time to find bitter revenge by killing more British. Brackenridge's presentation of Warren and Putnam embodies the two different types of concerned Americans in accord with the spirit abroad in the colonies. Warren ponders the breaches of faith and abuses of privileges; Putnam also feels the effects of the tyranny but, being more pragmatic, plans his strategy to fight for that cause. Brackenridge presents a full portrait of Warren the fated hero, one whom the audience can admire. However, the vivid sketch of the feisty Putnam is brief; one wishes Brackenridge had assigned him more than three appearances.

Because there is no disagreement among the Americans, there is not the need for many patriots to plead their causes or argue for one line of action. The British, on the other hand, are at odds within their own ranks. Gage knows the Americans capable of bravery, but finds action distasteful. Howe has shared combat experiences with the capable colonists, so while believing in the justice of his king's cause, reluctantly plans to battle. Burgoyne entertains so low an opinion of all colonials that he finds action against them beneath him as an officer and a gentleman. The relative ease in creating a variety of villains in comparison to delineating an

assortment of paragons who basically agree may explain why the British officers have sharper character delineations. Gage presents an interesting study in deterioration. From his stubbornness in his first appearance when he decides upon the plan of attack, he backslides into a guilt-ridden, fearful individual whose ultimate act of cowardice removes any sympathy the audience may have harbored for a man who tried to do his duty. Howe is Brackenridge's finest presentation of a sincere man torn by conflicting emotions. One can sense his agony at drawing the sword at former compatriots; yet one can appreciate his opinion of their "treachery" when they rise up in arms to shatter the values he has sworn to uphold. His final speech, the panegyric on the valued and worthy enemies whose bravery he must admire, rings with his regret for the twisted reasoning their excellent minds have pursued in their quest for so fantastic a cause. Burgoyne, the black villain, may have been intended as a foil for Warren, the noble hero. His opening invective against the colonists intensifies with every scene. Even at the end of the drama, he cannot attribute the terrible losses the British have suffered to the rude herd he has so blatantly despised. Had Burgoyne been able to utter at least some admiration for the Americans' sustaining power after their supply of ammunition had been exhausted, his character would have gained more credence.

Although character is not Brackenridge's first concern,

his choice of individuals to depict show an awareness of dramatic possibilities. Warren the Martyr who personifies the colonial ideal is matched by Gage the royal governor who in his acts is tyranny itself. Putnam and Howe are the men of action who must implement the convictions for each side by planning the war. Burgoyne, the black villain, serves propaganda purposes by his complete unworthiness. Gardiner finally emerges to seek revenge on the oppressors with his last breath if necessary. Warren's character becomes a hero's; Gage presents an interesting deterioration of character that presages the dissolution of British tyranny. Howe as tormented soldier but loyal subject is Brackenridge's greatest characterization. Burgoyne needs one redeeming feature to strengthen his credibility. In Gardiner we find a failure to show us an individual. Only his last two appearances confer his essence which is revenge. Putnam is well drawn, but so colorful a character should have been exploited. Even with some limitations, Brackenridge's characters serve well the cause in which he enlists. That each is intended to serve a particular function is reinforced through the diction employed for each.

In general the same diction is employed for all the characters, which one can attribute to eighteenth-century poetic dialogue. To distinguish between the opposing forces, however, Brackenridge utilizes certain devices to identify each side and to further his polemic purposes. Beginning with

Warren's biblical parallel to the avenging angel of the Lord and his invocation to the "God of Battles"⁵³ the justness of the cause is iterated by each of the American Generals: Warren three times, Gardiner two times, Putnam once. The British never call upon the Christian God for assistance: instead they rely on some vague heaven to assist or protect them, or to claim their loyalty. Only in an oath is the God of Christians invoked. Howe moans, "Would to Almighty God,/ The task unnatural, had been assign'd,/ else where." Then he swears, "But since by heaven, determined, Let's on."⁵⁴ Instead of the triune God, the multiplicity of nameless pagan deities is mentioned in Gage's guilty soul-searching as he ponders his broken promise, "Why then ye Gods,/ This inward gnawing."⁵⁵ Appealing for succor in redeeming the army's record after the first repulse, the anguished Howe cries, "O Gods! no time can blot its memory out."⁵⁶ Burgoyne's references to any deities are all pagan: "The hill itself, like Ida's burning mount,/ When Jove came down, in terrors, to dismay/ The Grecian host."⁵⁷ His comparisons to the Americans' effort at entrenchments are to the "pounding, like old Volcan's forge,/ Urg'd by the Cyclops."⁵⁸ In the battle, the British

⁵³Ibid., p. 9.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 13.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 17.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 30.

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 35.

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 19.

awe at American resistance approaches superstitious dread. Howe wishes to "drive these wizzards from th' enchanted ground." Clinton states that the heavy casualties inflicted on the British "seem'd not the agency, of mortal men."⁵⁹ This invocation of pagan deities, the taking of oaths, and superstitious dread of the foe underscore the justness of the cause of the Americans who repeatedly assert that God is on their side.

"Liberty," as to be expected, is the chief rallying cry in the Americans' speeches. However, the British use liberty in their own peculiar context. Howe equates their desire for "horrid liberty" to "foul ingratitude" to the country that gave them the opportunity to settle in America and pursue their destinies. After the battle, he regrets that their excellent minds could have twisted their duty to England into such notions as "wild-fire liberty."⁶⁰

Biblical allusions, current in comparisons to both cultures, are used twice. Warren opens the play by declaring that the Americans will sweep down upon the British as did the avenging Angel of the Lord. But in the mouth of an Englishman, the allusion is turned to the Americans' advantage. Clinton, depicting the casualties inflicted by the colonists,

⁵⁹Ibid., pp. 16, 30.

⁶⁰Ibid., pp. 31, 35.

draws a parallel to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah:

O such a day
Since Sodom and Gomorrah sunk in flames,
Hath not been heard of by the ear of man,
Nor hath eye beheld its parallel.⁶¹

Those who spread the word of God are spoken of with distaste. Gage, in agreeing that the rebels have valour, finds one source of inspiration for their "rage:"

Grey-headed clergymen
With holy bible, and continual prayer,
Bear up their fortitude-and talk of heav'n,
And tell them, that sweet soul, who dies in battle,
Shall walk, with spirits of the just.⁶²

In his characterization, Brackenridge does present differences of expression to individualize each person. Warren, the hero, speaks as a hero, first intoning the leit-motif of "God is on our side."

So yet I trust,
The God of battles, will avouch our cause,
And those proud champions of despotic power,
Who turn our salting to their mirth, and mock
Our prayers, naming us the SAINTS, shall yet,
Repay with blood, the tears and agonies,
Of tender mothers, and their infant babes,
Shut up in Boston.⁶³

Gardiner utters this sentiment twice, Putnam once. Warren invokes the cause of liberty five times, freedom once; the others do not use these terms. Having stated the causes of the revolution in his list of grievances, he is the only one

⁶¹Ibid., p. 34.

⁶²Ibid., pp. 11-12.

⁶³Ibid., p. 9.

concerned with the abstract concepts of "despotic power" and "sway" that mark the "tyranny" that oppresses them.⁶⁴ He of all the major figures quotes the Bible. In his one reference to the pagan deity, Bellona, he imputes worship of her to the British forces:

That Liberty,
Which, not the thunder of Bellona's voice,
With fleets, and armies, from the BRITISH Shore,
Shall wrest from us.⁶⁵

Having opened the drama with thoughts for all who will be affected by the war, in his death scene, Warren shows especial concern for his own family. Where the two other American generals are concerned with the immediate consequences of battle, Warren is ever conscious of the effect on all the colonies. He sees his death as would an idealist, urging his men to find courage and fight and picturing a poetic hero's heaven for those who may die in such a glorious cause:

I see these heroes where they walk serene,
By crystal currents, on the vale of Heaven,
High in full converse of immortal acts,
Atchiev'd for truth and innocence on earth.
Mean time the harmony and thrilling found
Of mellow lutes, sweet viols, and guittars,
Dwell on the soul and ravish ev'ry nerve.
Anon the murmur of the tight-brac'd drum,
With finely varied fifes to martial airs,
Wind up the spirit to the mighty proof
Of siege and battle, and attempt in arms.
Illustrious group! They beckon me along,
To ray my visage with immortal light,

⁶⁴Ibid., pp. 9, 23, 24.

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 23. This reference also shows his classical education in the reading of Livy.

And bind the amarinth around by brow.
 I come, I come, ye first-born of true fame.
 Fight on my countrymen, be FREE, be FREE.⁶⁶

While Warren's speech reflects the high-sounding ideals of the patriot statesman, General Putnam speaks as the patriot soldier. Convinced of the justness of the cause, he is the one who puts general ideas into specific context. Warren wishes to take a hill; Putnam fixes the manner, the troop strength, and the leader:

Now from our troops,
 Seven hundred gallant men, and skill'd in arms,
 With speech select, choice spirits of the war.⁶⁷
 By you, led on brave GARD'NER, to the heights.

Never seeing war in classical or historical terms, he recounts with due scorn the pomp and frills displayed by the British before their rout at Lexington:

In a firm array,
 Mock music playing, and the ample flag
 Of tyranny display'd; but with dire loss
 And infamy drove back, they gained the town,
 And under cover of their ships of war,
 Retir'd, confounded and dismay'd. No more
 In mirthful mood to combat us, or mix
 Their jocund music with the sounds of war.⁶⁸

Scorning classical or historical allusions, he refers to the enemy quite practically as "sons of slavery."⁶⁹ Although he

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 29.

⁶⁷Ibid., p. 9.

⁶⁸Ibid., p. 7.

⁶⁹Ibid., p. 6.

may agree that God smiles on the American cause, he realizes that mortal must do the fighting. After Warren's invocation of divine assistance, Putnam good-naturedly agrees, "Heaven, smile on us then,/ And favor this attempt;"⁷⁰ then proceeds to outline the plans. Although he acknowledges that fame and honor are purchased by a hero's death, his last speech is still that of a soldier dedicated to the living soldiers. With defeat imminent, Putnam urges the men to make the enemy's victory as costly as possible.⁷¹

Gardiner's speech, until the later scenes, is a curious mixture of the idealist Warren and the practical Putnam. His last speech in act one calls for many dead British soldiers in a cause that God has blessed.⁷² His next appearance outlines specifically the manner of entrenchment, "Let each his spade,/ And pick-axe, vir'rously, in this hard soil,/ Where I have laid, the curved line, exert."⁷³ Reflecting Putnam's realism, he sees the possibility of defeat, but emulating Warren, he couches the disaster in a classical context of Thermopylae.⁷⁴ He is the only one of the three Americans who, in his third appearance, appeals to regional

⁷⁰Ibid., p. 9.

⁷¹Ibid., p. 32.

⁷²Ibid., p. 10.

⁷³Ibid., p. 16.

⁷⁴Ibid.

rather than national pride in motivating the men to continue. Less idealist now than practical company commander, he presents the men with the choices left to them if their efforts fail:

Shall we the sons of MASSACHUSETTS-BAY
NEW HAMPSHIRE, and CONNECTICUT, shall we
Fall back, dishonour'd, from our native plains,
Mix with the savages, and foam for food,
On western mountain, or the desert shores,
Of Canada's cold lakes? or state more vile,
Sit down, in humble fassalage, content
To till the ground for these proud conquerors?⁷⁵

His fourth appearance shows still the same mixture, with the militant spirit of Putnam in the ascendancy. Wishing to avenge the death of Warren by killing more British in return, he offers only token reverence to divine assistance as he wishes, "Achilles-like" to slay an entire regiment.⁷⁶ His final speech marks his complete transofmration from part idealist and part soldier to the avenging angel of the Lord, much like the one referred to in Warren's first act speech. Scorning classic allusion and views of a hero's heaven, Gardiner wishes only for life to continue the fight so that he may go to his God in peace.⁷⁷ It is only in this, his final speech, that Gardiner's diction, filled with vengeance, becomes truly his distinguishing mark.

Gage's speech marks him more as an administrator, the royal governor, than the soldier. He sees the rebels, in the

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 26. This is the only speech in which Brackenridge personal enmity toward the Indians appears in the play. No doubt Gardiner was chosen to voice these feelings because of his relative obscurity.

⁷⁶Ibid., p. 31.

⁷⁷Ibid.

first act, not as Howe estimating the worth of an enemy, but as an official aware of the actions of the masses. His estimate of the rebel's performance at Lexington confirms Howe's praise of the valor of the colonists; yet he still sees them as the subjects he has been sent to govern, not as individuals. This general appraisal suits an administrative report he would be required to send to the Parliament: "these Americans, were not that herd,/ And rout ungovern'd, which we painted them." When he agrees to engage in further battle, Bunkers Hill, it is only after the opinions of his military advisors have been considered. Even then, referring to the advice of the man who had governed in his stead, he insists on following Haldiman's plan.⁷⁸ Far from being a dedicated soldier, sworn to lead his men in the service of the king, Gage is the first to think that promises of confiscated property will win for Britain the desired victory:

The resolution, of the soldiery,
With soothing words, and ample promises,
Of rich rewards, in lands and settlements,
From the confiscate property throughout,
These rebel colonies, at length subdw'd;
Then march we forth, beat up their drowsy camp,
And with the sun, to this safe capital,
Return, rich, with the triumphs of the war.⁷⁹

As the administrator who broke his promise to the people of Boston, he mourns his action, feeling his guilt, but justifying

⁷⁸Ibid., pp. 11-12, 15.

⁷⁹Ibid., pp. 14-15.

his treachery as necessary in the "mighty cause/ Of George and Britain, . . . in the cause of kings."⁸⁰ As any public official is subject to adverse criticism, so has been Gage, who feels the imprecations of this people whom he has been sent to "rule with an iron rod." He laments that his actions as ruler of the colony have earned him the hated appellations of "villain" and "murderer."⁸¹ His final action in the play is still that of an administrator with underlings to carry on in the absence of the chief. Faced with the American repulses and the British appeal for reinforcements, he delegates General Burgoyne, who has wished to see the rebels crushed, to provide the solution to this military problem: "Do as you please Burgoyne in this affair,/ I'll hide myself in some deep vault beneath."⁸²

Far different is the diction of Howe, who can be marked as the soldier in every speech he makes. His first speech shows his keen perception of the enemy's moral strength derived from the frontier life they have lead. He knows that such an enemy will be difficult to conquer. The moral fiber shapes the soldiers, soldiers who have proven their worth in battles he cites. He particularly remembers the tribute these New Englanders paid to his brother

⁸⁰Ibid., p. 17.

⁸¹Ibid., p. 18.

⁸²Ibid., p. 27.

when he fell
 Not unlamented; for these warriors,
 So brave themselves, and sensible of merit,
 Erected him a costly monument;⁸³

Although these men fought once as sons of Britain, their defection now is a challenge to the crown he has sworn to uphold. Therefore, reluctantly, he must draw his sword to quell the "insurrection" that threatens his king and has blotted the fine record of the royal troops at Lexington. His heartfelt cry shows the true soldier wounded in spirit:

Where is the BRITISH valour: that renown
 Which spoke in thunder, to the Gallic shores?
 That spirit is evaporate, that fire;
 Which erst distinguish'd them, that flame,
 And gen'rous energy of soul, which fill'd,
 Their Henry's, Edwards, thunder-bolts of war;⁸⁴

When the action begins, Howe forgets his favorable memories of the colonists, rounds up his officers, and coordinates all battle plans, once more ready to fight as a loyal soldier for "Britain's glory, and the cause of kings."⁸⁵ In command of his men, Howe is completely in charge of the situation. He calls upon the soldiers' loyalty to the king to whom they have sworn allegiance; he reminds them of the benevolence of their monarch who has made possible the material wealth the colonies now possess. Believing in the benevolent monarchy, Howe equates the colonists' drive for what he deems "horrid

⁸³Ibid., pp. 12-13.

⁸⁴Ibid., pp. 13-14.

⁸⁵Ibid., p. 19.

liberty" with the basest of motives, ingratitude:

The cause of kings,
Calls on the spirit of your loyalty,
To chastise this rebellion, and tread down,
Such foul ingratitude-such monstrous shape,
Of horrid liberty, which spurns that love-
That fond maternal tenderness of soul,
Which on this dreary coast first planted them.⁸⁶

He sees the "snake-stream'd ensign" as a symbol of this viper that the mother country has harbored in her bosom. Although Brackenridge draws on King Lear's imagery in his speech on his ungrateful children,⁸⁷ the image of the snake and ingratitude are so separated that Howe cannot be said to quote Shakespeare. Thus Howe's speech remains plain and direct, leaving the allusions for the more literary Burgoyne. Howe's promising the soldiers confiscated property differs in context from Gage's bribery. The governor feels that since anyone can be bought, the soldiers must win if promised enough. Howe believes the Americans are traitors who have sold their birthright, lost all to the king, and earned retribution. The soldiers are urged to crush the rebellion and live to enjoy the fruit of their just labors. He climaxes the oration with the final appeal to their loyalty:

The time moves slow, which enviously detains,
Our just resentment from these traitors heads.
Their richest farms, and cultur'd settlements,
By winding river, or extensive bay,

⁸⁶Ibid., p. 21.

⁸⁷Cf. King Lear Act I, scene 4, "Ingratitude, thou marble-hearted field,/ More hideous when thou show'st in a child/ Than the sea monstor!" and "How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is/ To have a thankless child."

Shall be your first reward. Our noble king
 As things confiscate, holds their property,
 And in rich measure, will bestow on you,
 Who face the frowns, and labour of this day.
 He that outlives this battle, shall ascend,
 In titled honour, to the height of state,
 Dukedoms, and baronies, midst these our foes,
 In tributary vassalage, kept down,
 Shall be your fair inheritance. Come on,
 Beat up th' heroic sound of war. The word,
 Is GEORGE our sov'reign, and BRITANNIA'S arms.⁸⁸

After several American repulses, Howe curses the fortunes that will allow the record of his beloved, highly trained army to be doubly besmirched by Lexington, and if the tide does not turn, Bunkers Hill. His mind, refusing to believe that relatively untrained, however brave, militia can be inflicting such tremendous losses on the British army, cannot appreciate the human element that seems at the time capable of bringing the Americans victory. Since mortal agency cannot accomplish such a fantastic feat, he attributes any gains to "wizzards from th' enchanted ground."⁸⁹ His spirits are at lowest ebb as he sees his troops flying from the crest of the hill. Refusing to allow defeat, this old veteran dispatches some officers to the rear of his ranks:

And with the small sword, and sharp bayonet,
 Drive on each coward that attempts to lag,
 That thus, sure death may find the villain out,
 With more dread certainty, than him who moves
 Full in the van, to meet the wrathful foe.⁹⁰

⁸⁸Ibid., p. 22.

⁸⁹Ibid., p. 30.

⁹⁰Ibid., p. 32.

Howe's panegyric after the battle illustrates the admiration of one soldier for another. In his tributes, although admiring the valor of his "countrymen," he regrets their twist of mind that have led to the encounter. In his praise, he confers on those whom he had damned as traitors the highest encomium his loyal heart can bestow:

E'en in an enemy I honour worth,
 And valour eminent. The vanquish'd foe,
 In feats of prowess shew their ancestry,
 And speak their birth legitimate;
 The sons of Britons, with the genuine. flame,
 Of British heat, and valour in their veins.
 What pity 'tis, such excellence of mind,
 Should spend itself, in the fantastic cause,
 Of wild-fire liberty. -- Warren is dead,
 And lies unburied, on the smoky hill;
 But with rich honours he shall be inhum'd,
 To teach our soldiery, how much we love,
 E'en in a foe, true worth and noble fortitude.⁹¹

But no act of the rebels can move the haughty Burgoyne, marked by his speech as a lord almost feudal in manner, always depicting the Americans in the most insulting terms. His opening speech is peppered with such inglorious epithets as "their haughty insolence," "disordered herd, untaught, un-officer'd," and "peasants." He considers the Americans no better than animals who should be forced back to "mix with kindred savages."⁹² In his second speech, after the hill has been fortified and Gardiner and the seven hundred are in possession, Burgoyne continues to castigate the rebels as

⁹¹Ibid., p. 35.

⁹²Ibid., pp. 10-11. Although both Gage and Burgoyne refer thus to the Indians, they cannot be read as Brackenridge's own opinions. The Indians appeared to Englishmen merely as one hostile element that prevented colonization.

"insolent" men with "pig'my souls."⁹³ Having been commissioned by Gage to dispatch whatever men he feels necessary, fastidious Burgoyne recoils at the bloodshed by the rebels and still refuses to soil his own hands in combat with so unworthy a foe:

'Tis yours, brave CLINTON, to command, these men.
Embark them speedily. I see our troops,
Stand on the margin, of the ebbing flood,
(The flood affrighted, at the scene it views)
And fear, once more, to climb the desp'rate hill,
Whence the bold rebel, show'r's destruction down.⁹⁴

Burgoyne's final speech, which closes the play, still shows no admiration for the bravery of the Americans, only impersonal wonder at the wreckage done to Howe's frontal assault troops. He recounts the daring deeds but robs the Americans of any part in them by cloaking them in a classic and apocalyptic imagery

The hill itself, like Ida's burning mount,
When Jove came down, in terrors, to dismay
The Grecian host, enshrowded in thick flames;
And round its margin, to the ebbing wave,
A town on fire, and rushing from its base,
With ruin hideous, and combustion down.
Mean time, deep thunder, from the hollow sides
Of the artill'ry, on the hill top hear'd,
With roar of thunder, and loud mortars play'd,
From the tall ships, and batt'ries on the wave,
Bade yon blue ocean, and wide heaven resound.
A scene like which, perhaps, no time shall know,
'Till heav'n with final ruin fire the ball,
Burns up the cities, and the works of men,
And wraps the mountains in one gen'ral blaze.⁹⁵

⁹³Ibid., pp. 18, 19.

⁹⁴Ibid., p. 27.

⁹⁵Ibid., p. 36.

Different from the stodgy Gage and the soldierly Howe, "Gentleman Johnny" is the only British officer to employ classic allusions. When he describes the colonists entrenching on the hill with "spades and pick-axes," he compares the noise to "old Vulcan's forge,/ Urg'd by the cyclops."⁹⁶ This juxtaposition of homey farming implements and ancient deities underscores Burgoyne's contempt for the "peasants" who dare to challenge British might. Burgoyne's speech paints him as a thorough villain. Both Gage and Howe, especially the latter recognize the worth of the colonial fighting man. Burgoyne is presented without one redeeming quality.

Although all the characters of this drama have the same elevated base for diction, one can argue the justification of this similarity in the fact that all of the men were officers. One can also note the attempt, for the most part successful, to differentiate the characters by the devices used: the Americans calling upon God to reinforce the leit-motif of "God is on our side"; the British calling upon the western, personal God for an oath, a multiplicity of gods for emphasis, superstition to explain the inexplicable. The Americans acknowledge that death may be imminent, but promise a hero's heaven; the British emphasize life, life on confiscated property and booty. The American generals fight for a principle, freedom; the British generals call upon George,

⁹⁶Ibid., p. 19.

Britain, and redemption of a blotted record. In individual characterization, sufficient aspects of their personalities are expressed in speech to characterize the individual: Warren is marked as the hero, Burgoyne, the villain; Howe and Putnam are unmistakably the plainer soldiers; Gage emerges as the confused administrator, relinquishing all authority. Only Gardiner lacks, until his final speech, enough differentiation from his American counterparts to give him his own identity.

Brackenridge at the time he was writing faced the problem of promoting the struggling independence movement in a form acceptable to him as a Presbyterian who could not countenance "theater" and as schoolmaster who shunned political activism. Before any audience could be inculcated with patriotism, its attention had to be captured and sustained. For his purposes, the school play was the ideal vehicle, imparting as it does a vital message while at the same time training the students in the best Princetonian traditions of dialogue and declamation. If Bunkers Hill was but a skirmish in the days of the revolution, it is, nevertheless of major import because it captured national fancy. Thus subject and theme wed in this appealing event that caught the spirit of the struggle for freedom. It symbolized the war of ideas which was the core of the American Revolution. Neither the strategic movements nor the personalities involved intrigued Brackenridge

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but what the encounter represented in terms of ultimate freedom. He wove these themes into the tapestry of battle, highlighting the conflict and throwing the symbols of the opposing forces into sharp relief.

Although there is constant iteration of the cause of freedom, the justice of the cause in the eyes of God, the glory of dying for one's country, and fighting for one's honor, it must be remembered that the dictum "repetition is the mother of study" was a fundamental educational principle of the day. The numerous speeches praising the patriotic cause do provide ample opportunities for student actors and audience to receive the message. In the stirring parallels of rallying cries: "The word of George our sovereign, and Britannia's arms," and "The word is Liberty, and Heaven smile on us in so just a cause," oppression and tyranny vie with heaven-blessed desire for freedom. Howe's castigation of the colonies for their ingratitude to the monarchy that allows them to exist finds its match in Warren's account of the hard-fought battle to wrest a living from the soil. His reasoned recital of the abridgement of rights would strike a responsive chord in any adult present. That these grievances were endorsed by all the colonies in the Declaration of Independence shows that Brackenridge had captured the main idea behind the insurgence. Brackenridge never lost sight of his overview of the battle and its significance. In depicting a contest on a Massachusetts hillside, he cast the

forces of Britain, representatives of oppression, vying with the troops of America, representatives of the opportunity to exercise lawful rights, powers, and desires. The dominant theme in the presentation was the assurance of divine approbation. Brackenridge grasped the magnitude of the event and shaped the battle into the most feasible form for his purposes.

The play as a whole is successful in its execution of intention and shows Brackenridge's emerging skill as a dramatist. The tighter structure of the form controlled his tendency to spread, seen in his commencement odes. His selection of incidents to be dramatized shows he captured the vital essence of the drama that was Bunkers Hill. His parallel scenes throw the ideologies of the participants into sharp relief. Especially fine are the alternating scenes of Howe and Gardiner in act five. Since the focus is on events and themes, his characters are presented rather than developed. However, the characters, more finely presented than those of the Rising Glory of America, demonstrate his growing awareness of and skill in this aspect of drama. Warren and Howe are the most successfully drawn; Putnam and Burgoyne, leaning more to types than individuals, do have some distinguishing features. Putnam's appearances are too few, but those appearances are satisfactory. Burgoyne should have had one redeeming feature to relieve his black villainy. Gage's character presents an interesting deterioration that does not strain credulity. Only with Gardiner does Brackenridge have a

failure, one which with a few more individual characteristics such as those emerging in his last two scenes could have been corrected. The diction as to be expected is in the inflated style of the eighteenth century. Here too we see enough careful attention to details of speech to differentiate the characters one from the other, except in the case of Gardiner. Even here, an echo or composite marks the speech as Gardiner's until his last scenes where vengeance takes over.

It is not as a study of character or as an accurate account of a Revolutionary battle that Brackenridge's play is of primary interest to the student of colonial literature. It is the theme or rather the conviction that God is on America's side which is worth noting because this motif is used continually in American dramas dealing with war. Even in comedies the righteousness of the American cause has been underscored although foibles of individuals and institutions are ridiculed.⁹⁷

The dubiety of America's being right in waging war has been an exceptional premise in drama until the late twentieth century when off Broadway plays have opposed the Viet Nam War. The romantic concept, or more accurately the treatment of the justification of war in an idealistic manner has been a staple in patriotic drama for almost two hundred

⁹⁷George Ade's The Sultan of Sulu, 1902, which spoofs "benevolent assimilation of the little brown brother," is a mild attack on the Philippine situation, but lines such as the Sultan's observation "the Constitution and the cocktail follow the flag," are typical of the shallow incisions into American policy.

years. Brackenridge adopted this chauvinistic stance from British pieces which show English superiority to all foes. Many patriotic prologues and epilogues from this time are in purely the patriotic vein and have only a tenuous connection with the matter of the play itself. In the first decade of the century many prologues celebrated the victories of Marlborough, the popularity of such pieces being attested by newspaper announcements; for example, the Daily Courant for Friday, August 11, 1704, after announcing a revival of The Emperor of the Moon, adds: "Also a new Prologue, occasion'd by the good News that arriv'd yesterday, of the Great Victory gain'd over the French and Bavarians, by his Grace the Duke of Marlborough."⁹⁸ The Whig ascendancy, which inspired Mallet's Mustapha (1739), and Mallet and Thomson's Alfred (1746), as well as strained relation with the French, which provides the background for Smollett's The Reprisal (1757), contributed to the proliferation of patriotic theatricals in England because of a bourgeois audience's interest in politics.

Brackenridge, in choosing patriotic drama took a natural avenue for the infant American theater, for there was a tradition of such entertainment in the English speaking world. The school boys for whom he wrote the piece would be

⁹⁸Mary E. Knapp, Prologues and Epilogues of the Eighteenth Century (New Haven, 1961), pp. 205-6. Miss Knapp notes that even in times of peace, patriotic prologues were a part of the drama scene and were often accompanied by disdain of foreigners, especially the French, an attitude missing from Brackenridge's works, in spite of the French and Indian War of recent memory.

more receptive to performing a representation of a familiar event. The message of the play would reassure actors and audience alike who might be wavering in their loyalty to the New World because of the risk in denouncing the Old World. They must adhere to the Revolution, for it is Godly. No one could object to a dramatic presentation as sinful which depicted heroes fighting and dying in a cause blessed by God. No one could object to a dramatic presentation which exalted honor and freedom over base slavery. By its exploitation of current themes, The Battle of Bunkers-Hill met the prime criterion for successful utilitarian writing, that of contemporary relevance. Theater of a Puritanically grounded frontier in time of war had to be useful to survive.

CHAPTER III

THE DEATH OF GENERAL MONTGOMERY

Bunkers Hill, which had so fired the spirit, imagination, and zeal of the colonies, appeared for a time to be unique in its salubrious effects on the American fighting spirit. The campaigns and battles that ensued could hardly have generated anything but doubt about the might of colonial arms. Perhaps the most spectacular of the inglorious defeats to the civilian eye was the ill-fated Canadian campaign. Montreal had for a time been in the Americans' hands, but when the remnants of the Northern Army under the command of General Sullivan returned to Crown Point on July 1, 1776, any small successes had been overshadowed by the disproportionate losses in men, money, and aims. Canada had not been made a "fourteenth colony," joining the fight to overthrow the yoke of Britain. Many men were prisoners of the British; the troops had been decimated by smallpox as well as enemy fire; and America had lost one of its most promising deliverers, General Richard Montgomery. Yet with so little to recommend the cause, three days later the colonies irrevocably declared their independence: "that these united colonies are, and of

right ought to be, free and independent states: that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown."

Brackenridge himself continued to contribute his efforts to the cause, writing another school drama in 1776 and joining Washington's army as chaplain that same year. It was Brackenridge's peculiar talent to glean whatever grains of hope might remain after defeat. As Bunkers Hill provided a memorable event, the tragic death of Richard Montgomery provided an American martyr, a British ex-patriot to celebrate in a drama of American heroism versus British cruelty and atrocity. The Death of General Montgomery was presented at Somerset Academy by the students in 1776. The following year the printed editions appeared.¹ The second printing of the Bell edition reflects the author's revision of the title to produce the more precise statement, Montgomery having been killed in the storming and not in the siege of Quebec. Therefore this is the text that has been chosen to review since it expresses the author's final intention. The Trumbull edition is in the opinion of Jacob Blanck a reprint

¹[Hugh Henry Brackenridge], The Death of General Montgomery, at the Siege of Quebec by the Author of a Dramatic Piece on the Battle of Bunker's Hill (Philadelphia: Robert Bell, 1772).

[Hugh Henry Brackenridge], The Death of General Montgomery, in Storming the City of Quebec, by the Author of a Dramatic Piece on the Battle of Bunker's Hill (Philadelphia: Robert Bell, 1777).

[Hugh Henry Brackenridge], The Death of General Montgomery, in Storming the City of Quebec, by the Author of a Dramatic Piece on the Battle of Bunker's Hill (Norwich: J. Trumbell, 1777).

of Bell's second printing.² Oscar Wegelin mentions an edition printed in Philadelphia, 1797.³ This text has not been located by Heartman or any subsequent bibliographer, nor has any critic unearthed this edition. Brackenridge makes no mention of a revised edition in any of his writings. The journalist continually kept his readers informed of his literary activities in the Pittsburgh Gazette, but makes no mention of another edition of the play.

In his preface, Brackenridge evidences his prejudice of stage-acted dramas in choosing to present his school play for the reading public. Although he labels the play a "tragedy," he stipulates the context in which that term is to be considered:

For though it is written according to the prescribed rules of the Drama, with the strictest attention to the unities of time, place, and action, yet it differs materially from the greater part of those modern performances which have obtained the name of Tragedy. It is intended for the private entertainment of Gentlemen of taste, and martial enterprize, but by no means for the exhibition of the stage. The subject is not love but valour. I meddle not with any of the effeminating passions, but consecrate my muse to the great themes of patriotic virtue, bravery and heroism.⁴

²Jacob Blanck, "Brackenridge's Death of General Montgomery," Harvard Library Bulletin, VII, No. 3 (Autumn, 1953), 361.

³Oscar Wegelin, Early American Plays, 1714-1830 (rev. ed.; New York, 1905), p. 72.

⁴Hugh Henry Brackenridge, The Death of General Montgomery, in Storming the City of Quebec, by the Author of a Dramatic Piece on the Battle of Bunker's Hill (Philadelphia: Robert Bell, 1777), p. 5. All further citations from this work will be abbreviated D.G.M.

Thus, rather than treating of a hero with a flaw or a fall from grace, the tragedy lies in the paragon's loss of life. Rather than the super hero of exotic origin arrayed in gorgeous clothes, enmeshed in the inevitable conflict of exalted love with sacred duty, such as Dryden's Almanzor in The Conquest of Granada, Brackenridge utilizes the fallible hero, dressed in rough linsey-woolsey, subordinating his love for his family and home and serving the sacred cause of duty. Because his protagonist was better known to his contemporaries than such obscure heroes, the tension does not arise from the suspense of the hero's ultimate fate. The interest devolves upon exposition of the moral theme, which explores the mystery Virgil stated as "Hic manus, ob patriam pugnando, vulnera passi." Brackenridge includes this line on his title page, providing the translation from Pitt's Virgil: "Patriots who perish'd in their Country's Right." That death should be a result of patriotism was a noble conundrum for the Latin poet. For the early American dramatist the ways in which one gains honor in death for country were a source of fascination. In this play Brackenridge transmits this interest by recounting brave deeds in an incremental fashion, then sustains tension by laying bare the dastardly practices of the opposition.

The playwright dedicated The Death of General Montgomery to General Thomas Mifflin, the ardent Whig from

Brackenridge's own state, who despite his Quaker heritage, was active in recruiting and training troops, achieving finally in February, 1777 the rank of Major General. Until this time Mifflin had been exceptionally valuable as a soldier-politician, particularly:

in the gloomy winter of 1776 by rallying the drooping courage of the militia of his native State . . . His influence was much promoted by an elegant person, an animated countenance, and popular manners. Had he fallen in battle, or died in the year 1778, he would have ranked with Warren and the first patriots of the Revolution.⁵

The fulsome dedications reflects the warm appreciation felt for the native son:

Every officer and soldier who has fought under your command, since the commencement of the war, speaks of your nobleness of spirit, your frank demeanor, humane and generous deportment, with a warmth of approbation which only true love and real admiration could inspire. The inhabitants of Philadelphia attribute to you, under God, and the good conduct of General Washington, the salvation of their city. For perhaps no other person could so effectually have roused the Militia of the Pennsylvania State or encounter the hardships of a campaign, in the depth of winter, even though the object of their enterprize was noble, the repelling of the British forces from the banks of the Delaware.⁶

The Prologue, written by Colonel John Parke, celebrates the valor of American fighting men, citing in particular

⁵Douglas Southall Freeman, George Washington, IV (New York, 1952), 21-22.

Since Brackenridge had joined the army in 1776 when Mifflin was aide-de-camp to Washington, it is entirely possible that the dramatist personally knew his fellow colonial or had direct dealings with those who could testify to Mifflin's attributes.

⁶D.G.M., pp. 1-2.

those whose exploits will furnish matter for the play, Arnold and Montgomery. By paying tribute to Wolfe and the Americans' loyal part in fighting for the British in the French and Indian War, the Prologue stresses the sacrifices the colonists endured as loyal sons of Britain; mention of Wolfe sets the tone for the reverence with which he is spoken of in the play, and prepares the reader for his appearance. The remainder of the piece acknowledges the valor of Montgomery in his Canadian campaign, pays tribute to his conquest of Montreal, and introduces Carleton, the governor and foe of the Americans. The Prologue closes on an optimistic note, picturing the hero disregarding danger and laughing at pain, spreading the flag wide to open the assault.

As the drama opens, General Richard Montgomery outlines the plan of battle to Colonel Benedict Arnold. In the stormy night Montgomery counts upon the elements to conceal the army's movements. He foresees scaling the precipice upon which Quebec is built, which so far has proven impregnable, then recounts how the Indians, inspired by the British, have eaten a bull which their white allies have told them symbolized a Bostonian. In order to partake further of such "sacraments," the Indians have promised to assist the British. Confirming that he had also heard of this mockery, Arnold excoriates the savages who he fears will replace the symbolic animal with real Bostonians and asks God's wrath on the supposedly Christian people who have initiated such an

enterprise. He notes it is the task of the Canadian expedition to get on with the battle which God has blessed by sending the covering snowstorm.

Montgomery praises Arnold's veterans who have come so far, enduring more of the severe Canadian climate in their long march to Quebec. He confers highest praise by asserting that their sacrifices for liberty have been unparalleled by any throughout history. Arnold agrees, continuing the encomium by mentioning the New England part of his forces. Montgomery sets forth a detailed plan: General Livingston will march with his Canadian forces to engage the enemy in the Upper Town, while the main force in a two-pronged attack storms the Lower Town. With God's help they will be victorious. Arnold closes the scene with a rhetorical pronouncement on the honor of death in such a cause, providing extra-textual irony in the light of the colonel's later treason of 1780.⁷

In the second scene Montgomery remarks to his aide Macpherson that the snow-covered ground where Wolfe and Montcalm fought is impregnated with foreboding. Although the general feels he and his aide will die, he will carry out the assault because the cause is just. He consoles Macpherson with God's mercy to the fallen warrior and fame among men. Macpherson's willingness to die for his country pleases

⁷If Brackenridge had revised the play in 1797, he would have had to change Benedict Arnold's role significantly.

Montgomery, who paints a Valhalla peopled by Wolfe and Montcalm. The general dispatches the lad with orders to be prepared for the imminent attack. The act ends with Montgomery's soliloquy, reflecting his concern for his pregnant wife, Amanda, for he fears she may fall prey to attack from Indians. Although he regrets that he may not live to see his child, he commends all to the providence of God.

Presentiments of death, voiced by the youths Captain Cheesman and Macpherson, open the second act. The New York captain bravely accepts the forebodings by dressing gaily in "decent garb," affixing to his person a bag of gold, hoping thus to purchase burial from the enemy. In a footnote, Brackenridge points out that this premonition parallels the oracular circumstances of Achilles' courageous death in the Iliad. Thus the colonial author wishes to underscore the heroism of men who know they will perish but still plunge into battle. Although Macpherson still does not accept Cheesman's death as a certainty, he acknowledges that death in a glorious cause merits praise and ends his musings by revealing that his ambition is to die like Wolfe. To seal the death pact which will bring them the same immortality martyrdom has brought Wolfe, the two youths embrace.

The next scene reviews practical considerations as Macpherson questions Montgomery's other aide about the storming of the city. The practical Burr praises Montgomery as a

leader who can execute the daring plan by inspiring through his personal example. Burr, who has longed to attack the British, is anxious to launch the Crusade. Macpherson's response, a compound of eagerness to battle and the recollected bitterness of his veteran father, recalls the gift of his parent's sword. Having lost an arm in fighting for the British, the elder Macpherson has bestowed his weapon upon his son, swearing him to avenge those who have repaid his sacrifice with ingratitude and exploitation.

The third act begins with a discussion of the forthcoming encounter by Captain Hendricks, Oswald, a volunteer from Connecticut and Arnold's secretary, and the Reverend Samuel Spring, the chaplain. In the chill dawn Mr. Spring and Oswald dispute the degree to which God will intervene in the affairs of men. Hendricks had seen Quebec as a second Beth-Horon. Oswald warns him that the age of miracles is past and that in this Christian drama, there will be no deus ex machina. Although the Chaplain allows for no dramatic suspension in the laws of nature to aid men, he brings religious idealism and positivism together by declaring that Providence provides generalship and natural aids to those in the right. The Chaplain concludes that by whatever we may term the course of human events, the Almighty reigns, meting out to each his lot, placing the acts of men in the context of a system of rewards and punishments.

Oswald challenges this view by demanding a victory at

Quebec and the winning of the war. The Chaplain, while certain of ultimate victory, cautions that to demand immediate victory is presumptuous. Hendricks settles the issue by expressing his resignation to God's will although expressing his own preference to return to his Pennsylvania home. Oswald closes the scene with a call to arms, for Arnold is leading his division to the walls.

In the next scene Hendricks asks Arnold for a place in the vanguard rather than command the rear-guard action. Although he envisions a placid life on the Susquehannah's banks, Hendricks wishes to store up a sum of daring exploits to spend on his progeny as his life closes. Arnold, impressed by the urgency of the request, assures him that he will have ample opportunity to display his bravery.

Colonel Campbell opens the final scene of the act by announcing that the troops are in readiness for the attack. The general responds in a declamation which combines a number of the sentiments and events that have been discussed thus far in the drama. After recalling the days when he fought as a British subject against the French on this very ground, Montgomery invokes the shade of Wolfe to witness the internecine strife now existing between those who should be fraternal. Montgomery does not dwell upon ghostly apparitions, but upon the Zeitgeist personified in the "inhuman George." Even as Hendricks, Montgomery longs for retirement on the banks of a river, the Hudson. His musings return to reflect

on the libertarian spirit of Wolfe which would have prompted the forthright man to leave such tyranny and seek refuge and relief in the colonial cause. Had the great Wolfe lived, he would now be assuming the task that Montgomery is undertaking. The general's thoughts are structured to a consideration of the cause, and his perceptions are all under the aspect of the high thought of war, from which he will not be deterred.

Arnold speaks to his men to open the first scene of the fourth act. The commander-in-chief of the division that marched to Canada through the wilds of Maine recalls the privation and cold his men have endured. He castigates as cowards the walled-up British, recalling that Montcalm's troops faced the forces of Wolfe with honor and bravery. Because the foe now lacks these qualities that British troops especially exhibited when fighting with colonial allies, the Americans will storm the gates and drive the cut-throat homicides from their dens. Arnold uses practical persuasion by asking his men why they should endure the cold when they can possess the shelter and warmth of the city.

As Arnold has addressed his men, so does Montgomery in the next scene. He reminds them of the battles they have won, of the help they will receive from the liberated French, and reaches a climax as he expounds on the tyranny of the British. He cries that in their inhuman offer of human sacrifice to the savages, the British have provoked not only the wrath of Heaven, but have caused an ecological revulsion as

"Nature sickens with the infernal crew." Then the Chaplain is asked to invoke God's Providence. Appealing to God as Ruler of all forces in the world, the divine proceeds to petition Heaven to free the just people from British slavery, to turn the imagination and heart of the King to truth, and that failing, to allow the colonies to triumph. After a comparison of George III with Belzebub, the clergyman changes testaments to plea that the Redeemer's blood lave them free of their sins. To cover all aspects of the battle, he concludes his orison by asking for safety in battle, or if it be the Divine Will, courage and eternal reward for those whom death will claim.

Montgomery expresses his fiat, which functions as the Amen of the invocation, and tries unsuccessfully to prevent the cleric from taking the sword. In eight lines Montgomery makes a confession of faith, cleanses his soul, urges his men to the battle, and spies an approaching messenger. With the news that a deserter has alerted the British to the American plans, all reliance on the covering elements has been swept away. But Montgomery decides to push bravely ahead, taking the lead to capture the first barrier. Appalled by the seeming reluctance of the troops, he chooses a band of officers to go with him to set the example, and assigns young Burr to conduct the troops in support. Burr pleads with the troops whose actions lack the verve of their leader as Montgomery returns to announce that the second barrier has been

successfully stormed.

In his next speech to the army, Montgomery cannot excuse the tardiness of his men. Holding up their previous successes, he asserts that their actions now deserve the epithets of ignominy and cowardice. In his urgency to spark some valor, he cries that the Canadians depend upon them for liberation and reminds them of their own grievances that only direct action can now redress. To give credence to his word, to emphasize the faith he has in his cause, Montgomery demands that the men advance or else shoot him to spare his witnessing any cowardice on their part. He again assures them that he will personally lead the assault. Captain Cheesman pays tribute to the charisma of Montgomery by pleading with him not to endanger the cause by exposing himself. Loss of the leader will abort the cause since Montgomery is the head and source of the action. In this protestation, Cheesman augers the loss of the battle for the Americans.

Although Cheesman's speech warns of the extreme danger, the killing of the general is abrupt. Montgomery thanks the young captain for his concern, repeats his desire to die rather than witness his troops' dishonor, then announces that God has allowed him this sad choice. As he dies, the general indicates that others have shared his fate.

Burr confirms the death of the leader and desires to pour his soul into Montgomery's bleeding veins. Brackenridge gives the source of his inspiration for this action in a

footnote. Burr then thinks of a means to exploit the general's killing. He wishes to immerse his garments in the general's blood so that the sight of them may enrage those back home and stir them to greater resistance. As he worries about the disposal of the corpse, he discovers on the field those whom Montgomery had indicated had died with him, the youthful Macpherson and Cheesman. Burr offers eulogies to his comrades.

Concerned about the bodies, Burr determines to stay to wake the dead although the Chaplain entreats him to save his bravery for the cause that still enlists them all. The young man, however, calls upon the Chaplain to stay for a moment to observe a strange form approaching through the mists. As the figure nears, he recognizes it as a being from another world whom he invites to stay and view the solemn scene while he offers another eulogy to Macpherson.

The ghost is General Wolfe, the reverence for whom has permeated the ambience of the drama from the start. He mourns the unhappy scene, paying special attention to the youths whose lives have so prematurely been taken. In a long speech that confirms Montgomery's estimate of him, Wolfe castigates the King and Parliament for whom he feels he has given his life in vain. The spirit is disgusted that he has fought to increase the power of these enslavers, but comforts Burr by reminding him that these sad events are God's will and

prophecies that a new day is at hand for America. First to articulate the "United States," the apparition spells out a federal republic that would actually come to be in about fifteen years.

The closing act follows the fate of the second column in the attack, the veterans under Arnold. In the first scene Arnold is in the thick of the fight, ordering riflemen and artillery to strategic offensive positions. As the commander chants the glories of victory, his ankle is splintered by a musket ball. Arnold can only be removed from the fighting after he loses consciousness when Oswald orders the move. Morgan, still unaware of Montgomery's fate, announces his assumption of command and asks for the soldiers' endorsement to continue the advance. After the soldiers voice their consent, Morgan sends Hendricks in the advance guard and Oswald announces that the detail has taken the barrier. Captain Lamb and the Surgeon, moved by cries for assistance, arrange to tend the wounded enemy. While this humanitarian action is being carried out, Hendricks orders scaling ladders brought by his Pennsylvania militia, offering a reward of one hundred dollars or the equivalent in gold to the first man to attain the heights and plant the Pennsylvania flag. In the midst of his exhortation, he receives a fatal wound. Oswald's eulogy for the young captain closes the scene.

The British Colonel Allan Maclean places the two columns in perspective as in scene two he reports the British

success against Montgomery. He is confident that a charge against Arnold's forces will bring an end to the opposition.

With the next scene, the plight of Arnold's column is underscored. Major Meggs, observing that the American contingent is surrounded, wonders at the superior numbers of the opposition. The possibility of Montgomery's defeat surfaces, but the major cannot bring himself to accept it. With renewed vigor, Captain Lamb continues the assault, ordering the field artillery of New York into firing position.

British and American forces meet finally in the fourth scene as Governor Carleton on the city walls exhibits the body of Montgomery to the Americans and points out that their position is hardly tenable. Although Captain Lamb submits to the will of Providence in the loss of their leader, he sees his death as a cause to continue fighting. To stay any precipitate action, Carleton offers terms of peace, threatening to be merciless should he have to lose more men to subdue the stubborn Americans, whose carcasses he will leave to rot. He caps his offer with false praise of American valor. Oswald urges the officers to accept because he feels that further carnage would be senseless. They have no chance to win, the terms are fair, and further deaths would squander life, not offer it nobly. Morgan agrees that the laying down of arms is the wiser course of action because lives will be spared and prisoners in Christian nations receive humane treatment.

In the final scene, Carleton commences his speech with

a catalogue of vile epithets which underscores the naiveté of the Americans. Carleton conceives anyone bearing arms as a traitor, deserving the rope; however, he will not hang the men for fear of reprisals from the remaining American forces. Fiendishly he promises the prisoners the most horrible captivity imaginable. Before sending them off, he has three selected to furnish the Indians with their promised blood-rites. The governor takes diabolical glee in recounting the scene of the holocaust. The captives remind the governor of his promises and beg him to let them suffer anything but fire, for which they have an overwhelming terror. So overpowering is their horror that they entreat him to shoot them rather than be subjected to the flames. Carleton is unmoved, but confides to Maclean in an aside that he cannot carry out his extreme threats because the forces of Montgomery are rallying. Therefore, he countermands the orders given before the prisoners to have the Indians burn their "Bostonians" in a sacrificial fire. Since war is uncertain, he insists that the savages hold their captives for further orders.

Brackenridge again felt constrained to document this facet of the governor's character by adding a footnote citing the governor's similar action toward the prisoners taken at the Cedars. Since his source is the stories of survivors of that phase of the retreat in May of 1776, it is possible that the play had undergone revision from its presentation initially at the academy when Brackenridge was still a headmaster and not

yet a chaplain.

Turning to his captives, Carleton attributes any treatment other than torture to the gentleness of their King. But he closes with further threats of scalping and burning if his cause should prevail. Morgan closes the drama with a fearless denunciation of the regime that can produce such outrages and cruelty. What Carleton proposes has been unparalleled among Christians; pagans and the wild tribes of Asia are named as originators of so vile a crime. In the chain of being, Nature whom the fall made degenerate can offer nothing to equal Carleton's evil. The infamy the British shall acquire on earth shall make the name "Englishman" synonymous in every tongue with depraved mankind. The twilight of British culture darkens to night as Morgan envisions the final judgment, closing the drama with the ultimate epithet:

And at the Last Day, when the Pit receives
Her gloomy brood, and seen among the rest,
Some Spirit distinguished by ampler swell
Of malice, envy, and soul-gripping hate,
Pointing to him, the foul and ugly Ghosts
Of Hell, shall say, 'That was an Englishman.'⁸

The drama as a medium of transmitting history usually requires distance to enable the writer to see events in proper context, to research complex causes, and to gain that objectivity which only the passage of time can confer. Because

⁸D.G.M., p. 53.

the siege of Quebec did not have this historical distance, the Revolutionary battle had to be recorded with accuracy and the characters and ideals of the heroes emphasized to gain sympathy and support from the audience. However in this peculiar time of American history, Brackenridge had a fund of "instant legend" from which to draw, quasi-facts and "reported events" of heroes and heroism as well as enemy perfidy and treachery. Many soldiers, especially officers, kept journals under the most unfavorable circumstances;⁹ those soldiers who knew how to write, corresponded irregularly their emotions, opinions, and evaluations of the campaigns they engaged in. In a country starved for regular, "authorized" coverage, these journals and letters, whose contents were noised about, gained the same credibility that our communications media today enjoy. In drawing upon this rich reserve of facts and reports to structure his second drama, those characters and events that embodied the noble virtue valor and exalted the "great themes of patriotic virtue, bravery and heroism" became Brackenridge's principle of selection.

The chief events of the plot follow the historical fact for the most part quite accurately. The British, under

⁹Mark Mayo Boatner, III, Encyclopedia of the American Revolution (New York, 1966), p. 699, notes that Major Meigs, Meggs of the drama, kept a journal during Arnold's entire Canadian expedition, with ink made by mixing powder and water in his palm.

Governor Carleton, had expected an assault on the fortress city after the American success at Montreal, November 3, 1775. Disguised as a peasant, Carleton had arrived in his capitol by fishing boat sixteen days after the American occupation of Montreal. In desperation he tried to fortify walls whose neglected state required major repair. The Canadian climate rather than the citizenry of the walled town abetted the leader whose position was precarious and whose demeanor when approached on negotiations bordered on the paranoiac. It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to consider the complexities of the Quebec hill, the religious implications which affected the attitude of the French Canadians. However, evidence exists to indicate that the resentment was such on the part of some of the people of Quebec that had the Americans consolidated their contacts with these people, they would have received assistance which might have reversed the outcome of this battle.¹⁰

General Montgomery had captured Montreal after

¹⁰George M. Wrong, Canada and the American Revolution (New York, 1935), pp. 283-86.

J. E. Bellemère, Histoire de Nicolet 1660-1924 (Arthbaska, Quebec, 1924), p. 177, asserts that favorable opinion of the American cause later changed because of the colonials' lack of diplomacy.

J. E. Roy, Histoire de las seigneurie de Lauzon (Levis, Quebec, 1897-1905), III, 418-21, and Henri Têtre and C. O. Gagnon, Mandements des Eneques de Quebec (Quebec, 1888), IV, 37, discuss ecclesiastical support of Britain which led the bishops to place those who supported the Americans under interdict. Vast numbers of Canadians ignored this episcopal threat, which belies the popular conception that Quebec was in theocratic thrall.

capturing Forts Chambly and St. John. He then joined forces with Benedict Arnold at Point aux Trembles in order that the combined forces could lay siege to Quebec. The lack of supplies and low morale of the troops made the plan one of questionable wisdom;¹¹ yet Montgomery's rationale in ordering an assault on New Year's Eve, like Washington's holiday surprise of Cornwallis, which effected the British surrender at Yorktown, was expediency. Arnold had arrived in the battle zone November 14. On December 4 Montgomery arrived with a force of between twelve and thirteen hundred colonists and several hundred Canadians in whom he had little trust. The cold was devastating. Smallpox was depleting the ranks which never matched the more than eighteen hundred men in the town under Carleton's command. Although Carleton had enough food for the five thousand inhabitants of Quebec, he lacked fuel. He waited patiently hoping that the assailants would be thwarted by the elements which had figured prominently in the three previous sieges of Quebec.

Montgomery, hoping to negotiate with Carleton, sent a message which the exasperated governor ordered burned since he refused to come to terms with a man he considered to be a

¹¹N. H. E. Faucher de Saint-Maurice, "Notes pour Servir a L'Histoire du General Richard Montgomery," Proceedings and Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada, IX (1892), 46-51.

defector.¹² Montgomery then shot his demands into the fort attached to an arrow. Since he believed that Carleton had less than one hundred trained fighting men, Montgomery wished to deliver the Canadians without bloodshed. The bombardment of Quebec, which began on December 10, 1775, was largely ineffective because of the snow. Contemporary sources¹³ vary on the depth of the snowdrifts, but estimations ran from twenty to thirty feet, which would have rendered cannon useless. The "earthworks" were made of snow drenched with water.¹⁴ These slippery, frozen protectors must have prevented swift movement and explain Montgomery's extreme vulnerability to attack, for Brackenridge has him felled in the vicinity of one of these snowbanks.

Montgomery did not threaten Quebec with massacre, which was customary under the rules of war, but promised his troops the spoils of the city in hopes of keeping the men whose term of service expired at the end of 1775. This also

¹²"The Diary of Foucher," Bulletin des Recherches Historiques, XIV (March and April, 1934), 105. This source throws some light on Carleton's hauteur and apparent cruelty to prisoners captured during skirmishes in December. Montgomery reproached Carleton for firing on a flag of truce and for "germ warefare." The general of the colonial troops believed that Carleton had sent infected blankets with some ragamuffins who were easily captured, thus causing the smallpox epidemic.

¹³Francis Masères, Additional Papers Concerning the Province of Quebec (London, 1776). Masères was attorney-general of Canada under Carleton.

¹⁴Wrong, p. 301.

serves as a contributing factor to the New Year's Eve attack, which Montgomery led the day after a severe snow storm. Arnold advanced from the east and reached the heart of the Lower Town; Montgomery came from the west. When the British saw his column advancing, they fired and killed the general and a dozen others in the lead. The remainder of the column turned and fled from certain death. The snow continued to fall, and later when a search party discovered Montgomery's corpse, only a frozen hand protruding from a drift was visible. The difficult fight resulted in about seven hundred fifty casualties, many of whom had pinned slips of paper to their hats which bore the legend "Liberty or Death."¹⁵ When the badly wounded Arnold had to be carried from the field, Morgan then assumed command, leading the assault upon the northern and western extremities of the Lower Town where they took a battery and drove the British from their guns in this area. The colonists then plunged into street fighting, but were eventually forced to surrender. The American prisoners of war for the most part remained in Quebec until August 10, 1776, when they were discharged on parole and put on ships bound for New York.

While the circumstances leading to the battle of Bunkers Hill required little exposition, the alarming defeat that capped the Canadian campaign required explication bordering on justification. Therefore, Brackenridge extended his first act to provide the rationale through its foremost

exponent General Montgomery. The first scene shows the two commanders, the ex-British officer Montgomery and the American patriot commander, leader of the second column, in a planning council. Montgomery reveals that the weather will actually aid the Americans by screening the attack and allowing the Americans to surprise the sleeping enemy. Brackenridge then utilizes one of the stories of the enemy's treachery current in the colonies. Montgomery recounts the tale of the sacrificial bullock given by the British to the Indians, an animal symbolic of the human sacrifices promised to the Indians for their aid. The general reflects the honor of the colonists at this diabolical artifice.

Brackenridge, in a footnote, authenticates this tale of terror by citing the letter from General Schuyler to the Continental Congress, which he notes was published for the information of the colonies. Schuyler had written to both Washington and Hancock of such an incident, naming Sir Guy Johnson, Superintendent of Indian Affairs, as perpetrator of such an incident:

A message to the Seven Nations went forth at once, and within two weeks nearly seventeen hundred of them gathered. Influenced by arguments, presents, and the contagion of excitement, they now 'readily agreed to the same measures engaged by the Six Nations, 'though Johnson confessed that their minds had been 'corrupted by New England Emissaries, & most of them discouraged by the backwardness of the Canadians.' The war-song was sung, the war-belts and hatchets were given and taken, and Johnson, roasting an ox and broaching a pipe

of red wine, invited the Indians to eat the emblematic but nutritious 'Bostonian' and to drink his emblematic but intoxicating 'blood.'¹⁶

Whether these were two separate incidents or the Congressional publication was inaccurate or ambiguous in affixing the blame for such an idea is a matter for conjecture. That Schuyler reported a bloody sacrament offered to the Indians by a British official cannot be disputed. Brackenridge skillfully integrates the tale with all its horrors and degeneracy into the text, providing the Americans with another compelling reason to secure the city for the American cause and escape such barbarous treatment in a land so far hostile to them. While crediting the original idea to a passage in Aeschylus' The Seven Commanders at Thebes, Brackenridge deplores the actual translation into fact in the hands of a people supposedly Christian.

Arnold buttresses the Indian threat by quoting from his own knowledge the depraved nature of each tribe to share in the blood lust. A comparatively recent arrival, Montgomery's words of such a diabolical plan gain credence through Arnold's explicit catalogue of tribes and a bit of their background. Arnold turns the Indian threat to advantage

¹⁶Smith, p. 294, citing Schuyler's letters to Washington and Hancock, Dec. 14, 15, 1775 in Peter Force (ed.), American Archives: Fourth Series IV (Washington, 1842), 260, 282.

by letting this profanation of the sacrament be further incentive to victory, and he then endorses Montgomery's view of the favorable weather. After both commanders commend the men who trekked with Arnold through the woods, itemizing hardships as well as victories, Montgomery reviews the plan of attack which an armchair observer would find sound, especially Livingston's diversionary tactics. The scene closes with Arnold's tribute to Montgomery, praise which the rest of the colonies had for the man:

I shun no combat, and I know no fear
But count the honour a full recompense,
For ev'ry peril in this furious war,
If men in after times, shall say of me,
'Here Arnold lies, who with Montgomery fought,
'Stemming the torrent of tyrannic sway.'¹⁷

The dramatist prepares us for the appearance of Wolfe in the speech of Montgomery which opens the next scene. Speaking to Macpherson, one of his aides, the general feels they tread "the ground of some romantic fairy land," and praises the idealistic combat of the two "knights" Montcalm and Wolfe. His character of pater familias is revealed as he predicts death and counsels his young aide. Montgomery is concerned not only with the physical needs, but the spiritual needs of his troops as well. He assures the lad that death in battle receives God's benediction and cleanses the individual for a holy place in the afterlife. The comfort of a

¹⁷D.G.M., p. 14.

resting place in the Father's bosom juxtaposed with the immortality gained on earth softens the stark reality of dying in a battle lacking the glamour and audacity of a Bunkers Hill. His vision of a Christian Valhalla peopled with the former opponents, Wolfe and Montcalm, underscores the reward of those who fight according to the rules of war and indicts the governor further for resorting to his reprehensible trafficking with the Indians.

Macpherson's youth and character arouse sympathy and interest for the loving son and patriot fated to die for his country. His reference to Bunkers Hill serves to remind the audience that that battle, so much admired, was also, from a practical standpoint, lost:

The light is sweet, and death is terrible;
But when I left, my father, and my friends,
I thought of this, and counted it but gain,
If fighting bravely, in my country's cause,
I tasted death, and met an equal fame,
With those at Lexington, and Bunker's-hill.¹⁸

Montgomery's soliloquy that comprises the third and closing scene affords us a final glimpse into the character of the man who had left the British army, settled in the New World, and gave his life trying to free the colonies from British tyranny. As a soldier he fears not death; as a provider he fears the effects his death will have on his unprotected wife and unborn child. His deep religious faith

¹⁸Ibid., p. 15.

impels him to commend his family and friends to the mercy and providence of a benevolent creator. Since the battle was not a triumph of arms, Brackenridge shows us how it was actually a triumph of character.

The first act moves at a brisk pace, compressing the battle conditions, the bravery of the Americans, the threat of Indian atrocity, and prophecy of death in a rapid interchange between the speakers. The confidence both leaders exhibit in the hope of completely surprising the enemy builds suspense for the outcome. Tribute to Arnold's veterans who have held the siege for the better part of the month after much deprivation and few successes captures the indomitable spirit of the colonists in such adversity. Brackenridge's rich characterization of Montgomery as valiant soldier, respected by his second in command as well as the younger segment of his forces, concerned family man, father-figure, and devout Christian unfolds naturally throughout the three scenes. These traits are further developed through his actions and interchange with the other characters throughout the remainder of the play. Since the deaths of Montgomery and Macpherson were common knowledge, devoting a scene examining their determination to continue the battle and their view on death intensifies the tragedy and provides an example to those remaining.

Act two correlates with act one in amplifying the attitude of untrained youths, unprepared by prior action in the French and Indian War, toward the reality of death. For

this, Brackenridge examined the motives and attitudes of two casualties, Macpherson and Cheesman, and one who remained to continue the fight, Aaron Burr. The striking action of Captain Cheesman on the eve of battle provided Brackenridge with material for this illustration in the opening scene. The young captain had dressed with more care than usual, preparing for battle, carrying on his person five gold pieces, saying, "That will be enough to bury me decently."¹⁹ From this raw material, Brackenridge fashions a monument to the patriotism and courage of Christian youth submitting to the divine plan:

But yet, Macpherson, there is something more,
 In melancholy, and a mind o'ercast:
 In this presentiment of some sad change,
 This throb of heart, that bodes fatality,
 And is not cowardice, but God himself,
 That in the knowledge, of the future ill,
 Doth touch the mind, with apprehension strange,
 And feeling sensible of its approach.
 You see Macpherson, I am gaily dress'd.
 Say, is it pride of the departing soul,
 That one would chuse, to have the body fair,
 And vested in comely, decent garb,
 'E'en, when it lies, yet tombless, on the field?
 Or is it hope, that thus the victor foe,
 May feel a kinder thought, and shed one tear,
 While it surveys the body trim and neat,
 By their own hand of the sweet life bereft?²⁰

Cheesman hopes that the "small gold" he carries in his purse will turn the plundering enemy from their quest of spoil and

¹⁹Smith, p. 126, citing a "Letter," February 9, 1776 in Force, p. 706.

²⁰D.G.M., p. 17. Brackenridge in a footnote elevates Cheesman's presentiment and bravery to classic proportions by drawing an analogy to the action of Achilles.

provide him instead with a decent burial. Imputing such decent, Christian impulses to the enemy underscores the degeneracy of a people who secure the allegiance of the heathens by promising Christian bodies for the final act of desecration.

Not quite so dramatic, but just as effective, is the response of Macpherson himself who had actually presentiments of his own fatality. Prior to the battle he had calmly sealed a letter to his father, telling him it was "the last this hand will ever write you."²¹ Yet the young aide comforts Cheesman by saying that although the presentiment he feels may be only an illusion, if death is to be their fate, it is the purchase of everlasting fame. Reverence for Wolfe and the historic ground confers a consecrational aspect on the battle and strengthens the credibility of the shade's later appearance. Using the actual feeling of two victims of the battle as demonstrated in their letters shows Brackenridge's awareness of the rich fund of source material to strengthen his drama.

Continuing with his theme, Brackenridge in scene two presents an interchange between Macpherson and Montgomery's other aide, the nineteen year old Burr. Where Cheesman and Macpherson's presentiments had idealized the battle, Burr's

²¹Smith, p. 126, citing Macpherson's "Letter to Father," 30 December 1775 in James M. Le Moine, Quebec Past and Present (Quebec, 1876), p. 208.

practical frame of mind causes him to view the coming encounter in a more mundane manner. He calmly reasons to victory: the boldly conceived scheme will surprise the enemy, the weather provides ample cover, the respected general Montgomery leading the attack will provide an inspiring example to the troops. Burr focuses attention on the British abridgment of rights and economic oppression which have shackled the colonists in slavery bordering on the biblical parallel of the Egyptian Captivity with specific attendant horrors.

Using the idealistic Macpherson, Brackenridge pleads the case of those colonial veterans of the French and Indian War, who when called to show their loyalty to the mother country suffered crippling injuries for their country's cause. Since most of the colonial army initially supplied their own arms, Brackenridge dramatizes the transference of sword from father to son to symbolize the transference of old loyalties. The sword is the means of avenging the maiming and useless suffering, caused by the old mother country. Macpherson's recollection of the leave-taking scene approaches a trance-like state wherein the father castigates Britain for her treatment of all like him. The bitterness underscoring the tone of the speech finds its fullest expression as the elder Macpherson orders that the sword that had consolidated and confirmed the supremacy of Britain in the New World now be wielded against that power:

And in Britannia's very cause I fought,
 Who now would stab me, and drink from my veins,
 The poor remainder of the blood I spilt.
 Come here my son, look on this wounded joint-
 This injured joint-remainder of that arm,
 Which I have lost for baneful Englishmen.
 O Britain, Britain, I will hold this up,
 To the wide world, as witness of the love,
 Which once, I bore you, and did testify.
 I say, my son, look on this injured joint-
 And let the Idea, to revenge, wake up,
 The hottest passion of a warriors soul.
 Where you shall meet an Englishman, tell this,
 And in his ear, exclaim--ingratitude.
 Exclaim--with a filial piety,
 Give, for your father, one life-severing blow,
 Making his head start from his soulders. God!²²
 Will they devour me, who have fought for them?

This distraction of Macpherson provides tension in the scene, contrasting the varying motives of those who fight in the revolution. This trance-like state is in the tradition of the brooding mysterious Scottish hero.²³ The practical Burr reflects on the very real civil wrongs of the country. In the first scene Cheesman, the supreme idealist, represents all soldiers whose bravery is the finer because of almost certain knowledge of death.

In these two expository acts, Brackenridge fully explicates the wide range of motives impelling the colonists to take up arms against a government whose resources of men and money seem by comparison inexhaustible. The confidence and

²²D.G.M., pp. 20-21.

²³Wittig, pp. 160-75, traces the evolution of this figure whom he sees resurrected for the last time in Sir Walter Scott's historical characters. Although there is no direct textual correspondence, there is a certain affinity between Brackenridge's Macpherson and John Home's Douglas. Both endure with nobility the fated events shrouded in an air of mystery.

knowledge of the older leaders are supported by the enthusiasm and dedication of the younger fighters. Storming the city in such inclement weather is revealed as a bold surprise stroke on the part of Montgomery. Confronting death, both old and young accept it calmly as the price for freedom. The reverence and appreciation expressed for Montgomery raise him to the stature of Wolfe, whose later appearance confirms this opinion.

Having revealed the mood of the commanders and the younger fighters, Brackenridge in act three moves to Arnold's camp, where talk centers on victory, not death. Captain Hendricks and Osald, Arnold's secretary,²⁴ illustrate the diametrically opposed views of the heavenly approbation concept. Hendricks' piety broaches on smugness as he views the weather as a direct sign from God for an American victory. Oswald, a true product of the Enlightenment, casts the battle in strictly human terms:

Look not for miracles,
Or hand of Heaven, heroic youth, to day.
For the late world enjoying what is past,
Of supernatural display to man,
Is left to general laws; no more vouchsaf'd,
Uncommon aid, of the dividing sea,
So swift o'erwhelming the Egyptian King,
Or of that Angel who in one night slew,²⁵
So many squadrons of the Assyrian host.

²⁴Boatner, p. 820. The former Connecticut journalist who had volunteered for the march to Quebec as a private, becoming Arnold's secretary, was commissioned in 1777 in Captain Lamb's 2d Continental Artillery.

²⁵D.G.M., p. 22.

The Chaplain attempts to reconcile the disinterested God of the Deists with the concerned God of Special Providence. He asserts the sovereignty of God over every act of man, being able to move the minds and hearts of men to act in conjunction with the course of nature, rather than directly intervening or suspending those established laws. The present heaven-wrought symbiosis of courageous colonists and fog-shrouded atmosphere manifests Divine Assistance in the natural course of events. Thus:

The Almighty reigns, distributing to each
That which we call our lot. Not one hair falls,
Of our head, to the ground, but it is numbered.
He reigns, and gives to innocence, its due reward,
But to the guilty, punishment and death.²⁶

Oswald challenges this system of rewards and punishments by demanding proof through victory in the coming battle. The Chaplain, countering that God's cause cannot be bound by temporal limitations, renders hope to the colonists who, having lost the battle for Canada, still fight the war:

A firm persuasion, hath possess'd my mind,
That this fair cause, shall triumph finally;
But the complection, of the ensuing hour,
We cannot tell. It may be fortunate,
And yet as partial, to the whole event,
It may be clouded, and deep wrought with woe.²⁷

Hendricks buttresses the Chaplain's argument by accepting whatever role may befall him in the overall scheme. His

²⁶Ibid., p. 23.

²⁷Ibid.

nostalgic remembrances are interrupted by Oswald who alerts them that the action has begun.

The tension present in this scene comes not from the immediacy of the engagement, but from divergent religious viewpoints. Brackenridge shows that while the forces are united in the revolution, the religious coloration of the varying views ranges from the last vestiges of Calvinistic orthodoxy to the "enlightened" deism of this Age of Reason. The nostalgia of Hendricks, who would prefer to live to enjoy the fruits of the revolution is in marked contrast to the fey Macpherson, thus adding poignancy to Hendricks' later death in the Lower Town.

Scene two shows Hendricks as a man of courage as well as piety. Scorning rear guard action, he signs his death warrant when he pleads to fight with Arnold so that in his old age he may unfold tales, eyewitness accounts of the triumphs he feels the Americans will achieve. Arnold's consent furnishes us with one of the rare examples of Brackenridge's irony:

Your station shall be chang'd, and in the van,
You shall have scope to shew your fortitude,
And purchase glory, that shall never die.²⁸

So far Arnold has been shown in a subordinate position, agreeing with Montgomery, amplifying his remarks, and expressing reverence for the general. Since the assault was a joint

²⁸Ibid., p. 25.

attack and Arnold had won honors in his own right through his arduous trek through the wilderness and siege of the city, Brackenridge, while not detracting from the stature of Montgomery, praises Arnold and his men with these two scenes. The dramatist deepens the suspense with the request of Hendricks since the fate of this minor figure was not widely known.

Having shown Arnold's camp preparing its assault, Brackenridge balances the action with a parallel scene in Montgomery's camp to close the act, thus focusing the emphasis of the battle on the hero's forces. Since Montgomery's relationship with Arnold and the young Macpherson had been fully delineated in the first act, and his other aide Burr had completed an emotional set depicting the attitude of the young toward their leader, the dramatist selected another staff officer, Colonel Campbell, to share the final moments before the army moved out. However, that Colonel Campbell had ordered full retreat after the death of Montgomery was common knowledge at the time the play was written²⁹ requiring that his role, among so many heroes, be limited. Later evaluations of Colonel Campbell's character justified Brackenridge's use of him merely as interlocuter.³⁰

²⁹Smith, p. 143.

³⁰Ibid., p. 115. "An overgrown spaniel that had wiggled into the company and more or less into the fur of mastiffs, Donald Campbell had a vary military air, no doubt. Most of such brains as fell to him -and they were ample in quantity - nature had planted in his back, and nothing had been able to entice them very far into his cranium."

Montgomery's response that the light is not yet right for the advance allows him time for personal reflections covering his role as a loyal son of Britain in the French and Indian War, the idealization of Wolfe who would not have countenanced the oppression of the government he had fought to preserve in the New World, and the moral revulsion felt by a Christian warrior at the diabolical tactics of the British in encouraging the Indians in their savagery. Projecting a living Wolfe, Montgomery summarizes the situation. Wolfe is seen as abhorring the British government, retiring to the New World to find liberty, offering a paean to its natural wonders, and volunteering his services to fight to preserve for the colonies that freedom they had been promised. Wolfe, had he lived, would now be leading the expedition to the walled city.

As he had used the simple narrative through Macpherson to plead the cause of the veterans, the dramatist now uses the device of seeing the scene through Wolfe's eyes. Thus Brackenridge avoids a long soliloquy on Montgomery's personal life and motivations, encapsulates the major theme of the first

Recent scholarship supports this evaluation. Harrison Bird, Attack on Quebec (New York, 1968), p. 205 states, "Colonel Campbell was as empty as the void he left behind the second barricade, as dead in spirit as his general was to life." Don Higginbotham, "Daniel Morgan" Guerrilla Fighter," George Washington's Generals, George Athan Billias (ed.) (New York, 1964), p. 297, "His timorous subordinate, Lieutenant Colonel Donald Campbell, had beaten a hasty retreat."

two acts, and stresses the repugnance of any right-thinking man must feel for the outrages the English government has inflicted upon its colonies. The final tribute to Wolfe, placing him at the head of the American ranks, is a subtle foreshadowing of Montgomery's own death and a preparation for the appearance of the revered hero whose memory informs so many actions. This brief pause with Montgomery clears the way for the multiple actions that occur in rapid-fire succession in the next act.

The tempo of the drama accelerates in the rising action that comprises the third act. Emphasis on victory and heroism is tempered by the doubts offered by Oswald. The Chaplain's assurance that although the battle may be lost, the war can be won, sets the defeat in the hands of a wise Providence. Heroism is accorded to Arnold's men through Hendricks, and Montgomery's final moments of reflection on Wolfe confer patriot status on him in preparation for his appearance.

Although the drama celebrates General Richard Montgomery, Brackenridge never overlooks the feats of the American born heroes, Arnold and his men. In the fourth act, Arnold and his men prepare to march, thus initiating the action, the battle for the city. Through Arnold, Brackenridge praises the courage and fortitude of his army on the exhausting trek through Maine and their belabored siege of the city while waiting for Montgomery to join them. These hardy veterans have been confirmed as Arnold terms them, "heroes and patriots." Brackenridge introduces the element of British

cowardice which has kept them confined in the city, afraid to fight. Arnold had actually dared the British to fight on the plains by messenger, letter and parading his troops in front of the city walls in direct challenge.³¹ Brackenridge, as in The Battle of Bunkers-Hill, acknowledges the practical motives that can spur men to an objective by having Arnold dangle the warm comforts of Quebec before the half-frozen soldiers:

Shall we brave souls,
 Ly on the cold ground, thus unsheltered
 From rain, deep snow, and blinding ice, and storm,
 But with Heaven's canopy, while they possess
 Yon noble building; chearful residence?
 On then my countrymen, and drive them out,
 To us surrendering up the ample halls,
 Aspiring domes, and structures of Quebec.³²

Because Arnold is wounded early in battle, staging the commander in an address to his troops prior to the fight allows the dramatist to reveal him as a hero, veteran of battle, while allowing the drama to focus on the major and climactic event, the killing of General Montgomery. The scene also balances with the prior one in showing us Montgomery before the attack.

With the next scene the drama reaches its climax in the death of Montgomery. His opening salutation of "friends and countrymen" reflects the newcomer's appreciation for the honor accorded him in his position. Citing his army's triumphs,

³¹William Wallace, "Benedict Arnold, Traitorous Patriot," Billias, p. 172.

³²D.G.M., p. 28.

America's hopes for an ally in liberated Quebec, and the need to drive the forces of England from the continent, he finishes his exhortations with the tale of the blood-orgy promised the savages. The Chaplain's prayer reasserts the justness of the American cause, but acknowledges that men cannot commit Divine Assistance to their timetable. He therefore asks that those who will die in battle be purified in Christ's redeeming blood.

Brackenridge altered history in placing the Chaplain with Montgomery's forces.³³ However, by including the Chaplain with the forces of the senior commander, the dramatist makes an effective change to show Montgomery's respect for the clergy as the "aid-de'camp" of God to man. When the general permits the Chaplain to bear arms, Brackenridge underscores the justness of a cause that inspires men of peace to combat as in a holy war. At the scene of the slaughter, the Chaplain's insistence on this sacred cause and God's ultimate blessing in victory is intended by Brackenridge to bolster the sagging spirits of the colonies who still in 1777 after two years of war, found little to cheer or inspire them.

The messenger who brings news of an American deserter³⁴ serves to exonerate Montgomery's plan. Had the plan not been revealed, the element of surprise attack in such unfavorable

³³Bird, pp. 207-08.

³⁴Smith, pp. 123-24, names a Sergeant Singleton "and perhaps other deserters" as informers.

weather might have succeeded. Brackenridge could have chosen to excoriate defectors from the united effort with a suitable speech on Patriotism by Montgomery. However, the general's brief reply and personal example of forging ahead in spite of the added odds are far more effective in underscoring the necessity to fight for their cause.

With the bold resolution to advance, the drama rapidly moves ahead. Montgomery leads his officers, falls back to spur on the tardy troops,³⁵ takes the first barrier, and returns to offer a dramatic choice to the warriors: follow me or kill me! Contemporary accounts and later researchers do not cite this event; therefore we must assume it is the dramatist's invention. As such, it is highly effective, emphasizing the General's fearlessness, courage, and willingness to offer the ultimate sacrifice for this new country.

With a small band of officers, including Burr, Macpherson, and Cheesman, Montgomery pushes on to the second barrier where Montgomery, Macpherson and Cheesman lose their lives. There are no stage directions to indicate how Montgomery meets his death, just the abrupt remark:

But such, the backwardness, of these my troops,
That of necessity, I risk my self.
Can I survive their infamy, their shame?
Nay death, swift death is rather my sad choice;
And God hath sent it--³⁶

³⁵Ibid., p. 142, and Bird, p. 212, refer to Montgomery's efforts to advance his lagging troops.

³⁶D.G.M., p. 36.

The lack of preparation for the death of General Montgomery is the most surprising feature of the play. The speed with which the mortal shot carries off the general makes his actual demise classic in understatement, leaving Burr to pour forth in lamentations the death not only of the general, but of Macpherson and Cheesman too. Where Brackenridge erred on the side of verbosity with the speech of General Warren, he fails with the spareness of lines that cannot be excused as compression. Some brief mention of enemy fire, the sound of a shot, then a mention that "God hath sent me death" would have clarified the blurred image, a task that Burr must undertake.

Burr was the only choice for eulogizing his fallen leader and youthful comrades-in-arms. However, his speech which includes his mourning, desire to wear the bloodstained clothes back as an incentive for continuing the fight, and two eulogies for his fallen comrades contains too abrupt shifting of moods and of subject. Montgomery's eulogy should have been matter for one speech only. Since the Chaplain was on the scene, some interchange should have taken place before Burr discovers and eulogizes his youthful comrades. These eulogies should have been compressed from nineteen lines to ten since both were approximately the same age, fair of face, and fallen in the same manner. Individuation of the personalities could have been accomplished by one line of tribute to Macpherson's geniality, and the nineteen year old

Cheesman's association with Burr prior to the war. Burr's attempting to stay to wake the dead, serves a twofold purpose. The Chaplain, who has agreed the age of miracles has passed, remains to urge the youth to "save thy valour for a better hour"³⁷ and act as a creditable witness of the apparition the aide greets in a final requiem.

The appearance of the shade of Wolfe fulfills the many references in anticipation of him. Especially noteworthy is his confirmation of Montgomery's reading of his character. In fact, Wolfe considers his own sacrifice in vain. The only person in the play to refer to a strong United States, Wolfe prophesies a federal government for the new colonies now united only in purpose. These themes first voiced in The Rising Glory of America, now modified and fortified by recent events, voiced by a heaven-sent agency to comfort the afflicted living, are an indication of Brackenridge's subtlety in urging his ideas on his audience.

This fourth act brings to a climax the battle for Quebec. Not only is Montgomery lost, but the youths who served him as well. Arnold's forces must play out the drama with their surrender to Carleton. Scene one is short enough to keep the emphasis on Montgomery as hero, but long enough to establish Arnold and his men as the valiant veterans they in fact were. However, the second scene diffuses the focus intended by the dramatist by incorporating too many mixed

³⁷Smith, p. 132, reports that the ignominious Colonel Campbell forced Burr to flee with the remnants of the army.

events and moods: a confident Montgomery, a betrayed but determined Montgomery, a fighting Montgomery, a dead Montgomery. Breaking scene two with Montgomery's determination to continue after news of the deserter's warning to the British would have sustained the tension and focused attention on a third scene the battle, the death, and the ghost's appearance. Too long also is the speech of Burr which could have been rewritten to include an exchange with the Chaplain and to eliminate the repetitive eulogies.

The last act, the tragic denouement, opens with the most effective event, the wounding and removal of Arnold from the battlefield. Had the gallant commander not been wounded,³⁸ one is tempted to speculate that the indignity of capitulation would not have occurred. The colonel's insistence on not leaving the field supports this contention, for Arnold would fight until the death. This insistence is not the dramatist's invention for rhetorical effect. Being unable to stand, Arnold, supported by the Chaplain remained upright, directed Captain Morgan how to proceed, and only quit the field when the last of his troops passed on

³⁸D.G.M., p. 41.

Isaac Senter, The Journal of Isaac Senter (Philadelphia, 1846), p. 34, describes the wound, "the ball had probable (sic) come in contact with a cannon, rock, stone, or the like, ere it entered the leg which had cleft off nigh a third. The other two thirds entered the outer side of the leg, about midway, and in an oblique course passed between the tibia and fibula . . . at the rise of the tendon achilles."

encouraged by his promises of victory.³⁹ Although not quite in accord with the facts, Brackenridge chooses the most effective way to remove the general from the field by having him drop unconscious, involuntarily carried from the field on orders from Oswald, in spite of his statement to stay while life remains in him.

History dictated dramatizing the incident following Arnold's removal from the field, the assumption of command by Captain Daniel Morgan. Although Lieutenant Colonel Greene and several other field grade officers were present in the ranks of Arnold's "famine proof Veterans,"⁴⁰ the young Virginian assumed command with the endorsement of the soldiers and forged ahead to do some damage in the Lower Town. Various reasons are given for Morgan's elevation in sources which also differ on whether Morgan asked for a vote of confidence from the troops or was especially chosen by them.⁴¹ Brackenridge

³⁹Bird, p. 208.

Smith, p. 132, and Senter, p. 34, identify the supporters as "two soldiers."

⁴⁰Senter, p. 32.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 34. The surgeon stationed in the rear, assumed that Lieutenant Colonel Greene was in charge.

Boatner, p. 735, merely states that Morgan "took command from the wounded Arnold."

Bird, p. 150, claims that although Morgan's senior officers were "somewhere about," he assumed command, leading his own craft Virginia riflemen.

Smith, pp. 132-33, states that when the soldiers called on Morgan to assume command, Colonel Greene, "since Morgan knew something of a war - cordially assented."

Higginbotham, p. 296, asserts that the wounded Arnold persuaded Morgan to take command; his first act was to rush forward to the barrier, yelling for the rest to follow.

effectively utilizes the democratic fiat of the soldiers by having Morgan announce that command has devolved on him and inviting the soldiers to participate in decision-making by determining the course of the column:

Say, shall I draw you off ingloriously,
With speediest step? or shall we yet advance,
And pour revenge on the indignant foe?⁴²

The troops, still unaware of Montgomery's loss, urge Morgan on as commander. Morgan's including Hendricks in the advance charge is fully in accord with his own wish and Arnold's promise. Thus Brackenridge allows Hendricks, who had wished to live, to taste of victory before his death by taking a barrier and cutting off and wounding vast numbers of the enemy.

Brackenridge inserted one incident of pure invention, Captain Lamb's concern for the enemy wounded. This humanitarian concern from one who later is horribly mutilated⁴³ sharply contrasts with the diabolical threats of the governor to his prisoners. The Surgeon, who is Dr. Isaac Senter, actually stood his post at the hospital in the rear, although he had requested to lead one of the companies.⁴⁴ Such addition adds to the drama's effectiveness.

Arnold's forces experienced a series of small victories before being surrounded. Brackenridge chose to dramatize one

⁴²D.G.M., p. 42.

⁴³Bird, p. 215, notes "his shattered and bloody pulp of fact; there was no eye in the torn and gaping socket." Smith, p. 139, and Boatner, p. 595, support this report.

Originally in Montgomery's column, Lamb had been sent to Arnold in the war council, Bird, p. 199.

⁴⁴Senter, p. 32.

of them, Hendricks' storming the barrier immediately after Arnold's death. He then closes the scene with Hendrick's death. Oswald, who had challenged Hendricks and the Chaplain's faith by demanding proof in victory for the Americans, forsakes his skepticism on the altar of Hendricks' sacrifice. This eulogy is far more moving than those offered by Burr. Oswald raises his death from a personal loss to the plane of mourning for a hero, beloved by his colony and colonial companions. Particularly touching is Oswald's reference to the Susquehannah, the stream on whose banks Hendricks had hoped to spend his life, tending to his aged parent and raising a family. Brackenridge places another star, this time from Arnold's camp, in the galaxy of martyrs for the American cause.

The next scene clarifies the positions of the two divergent columns, working without the benefit of communication. The British Colonel Allen Maclean announces that Montgomery has been killed, his forces scattered. Arnold's forces, unaware of the catastrophe, continue to fight in Lower Town toward their rendezvous point with Montgomery. With this scene, the drama begins a rapid downward sweep. Scene three continues with the horror of encirclement breaking upon the Americans. Major Meggs,⁴⁵ alerts the Americans to the danger

⁴⁵This Revolutionary figure is actually Return Jonathan Meigs, thirty-five year old Connecticut officer, with Arnold on his march to Quebec, Boatner, p. 699.

and wonders at the superior numbers, unable to believe that Montgomery has been unsuccessful. Captain Lamb calls on his artillery to cut down the foe. These two scenes are necessary to place in chronological context the events of the two simultaneous assaults. The situation having been clarified by minor characters, the drama now focuses on the last tragedy of the ill-fated battle, the surrender of the Americans.

The pentultimate scene of the play centers on the dramatic confrontation of the royal governor with Arnold's forces at the wall of the Upper Town. Actually, Arnold's troops had by now been fragmented, and some of the units had surrendered prior to the others; Morgan's forces were the last to capitulate. Since the surrender was fact, Brackenridge had to provide some rationale for this act of the Americans. The dramatist paints Governor Carleton in the blackest of terms, using his abuse of the body and his false promises of Christian treatment to intensify his villainy. Montgomery's body was not recovered from the drifts until late in the day, when from amongst the fallen heroes, he was identified by a former British army comrade and an American taken prisoner at Saut-au-Matelot.⁴⁶ The British Captain Laws finally effected the complete surrender of the remaining forces of Arnold.⁴⁷ The

⁴⁶Bird, p. 220. Arnold's forces had surrendered by 11:00 A.M., making it impossible for the body to be discovered, identified and brought to the wall.

⁴⁷Smith, pp. 145-46.

governor, the symbol of the cruel foe, holds aloft the corpse, the symbol of the defeated cause. Rather than have the band surrender to a subordinate, the dramatist has the Americans succumb to the promises of the commander-in-chief of the opponents. Although Lamb urges the men to continue fighting, Brackenridge, realizing the ineffectiveness of a severely wounded man's plea, does not portray Lamb as injured.⁴⁸

Brackenridge unfolds the character of the governor throughout the two last acts. After using the body of Montgomery to show how effective his forces are, Carleton offers honeyed words of praise for the Americans' valor and "love and pity" for their submission. His threat of ill-treatment is based on the cern he has for shedding more blood. These two arguments alternately affect the Americans. Oswald, not wishing more blood shed in a lost cause, and Morgan, lulled by the promise of humane treatment, deem it prudent to accept the terms of the chief of the opposition.

Morgan's surrender and urging his men to do likewise is not at all in accordance with fact. Morgan was actually the last man to turn over his sword, arguing against his subordinates' plea to surrender. When literally overwhelmed, Captain

⁴⁸ Since Brackenridge avoided all violence on stage except for announcements of "a fatal shot" or "a musket ball hath pierced my groin," he could not depict Lamb's serious wounds or demean the captain's heroism by having him suffer a less serious wound.

Morgan surrendered his sword to a priest rather than an enemy soldier.⁴⁹ However, four hundred twenty-six American prisoners in Quebec were another disheartening entry in the diary of the colonies' struggle for independence. By showing the Americans horribly duped, thus shifting the blame for surrender on the treacherous Carleton, Brackenridge makes the situation somewhat more palatable. Lamb had offered token resistance signifying a fighting spirit that cannot be quelled. Morgan's acquiescence to the suggestion of an enlisted man, however much trusted as Arnold's secretary, is consistent with the scene in which Morgan asks for their participation in deciding their destinies.

This particular scene shows Brackenridge at his best in selecting facts and altering history to support his theme. Montgomery remains a hero, along with Cheesman, Macpherson and Hendricks, for paying the ultimate sacrifice. Arnold having been removed by a crippling wound, is not at hand to inspire the men with his brilliance and genius. The decision is in the hands of lesser figures who, while brave and determined, err on the side of innocence in believing the promises of the deceitful governor. Carleton, through these promises which prove to be false, signifies the foe whose behavior falls into the same pattern of the British government's broken

⁴⁹James Graham, The Life of General Morgan (New York, 1856), pp. 102-03. Bird, p. 216, and Smith, p. 146, both document this story.

promises and repression.

In the final scene, Brackenridge skillfully integrates the known attitude of the governor toward the rebels, the tale of Indian atrocity from General Schuyler, the eyewitness accounts of the campaign's survivors and the colonists' genuine reactions to the frontier horrors that Carleton utilized to subdue them. Utilizing the stories of atrocities circulating through the colonies, the dramatist incorporates the villainous aspect of the governor to portray what might have happened once the Americans became his prisoners. Immediately after their capture, Governor Carleton informs them of his deceit and his true attitude that will motivate his further action. The vile invectives hurled at them are entirely in accord with the mind of a man who sincerely viewed the "rebellion" as the work of a few leaders concerned with their own ambition and selfaggrandizement, who had been able to misrepresent armed insurrection as the only way to solve colonial grievances.⁵⁰ Carleton articulates sentiments consistent with a loyal soldier administrator who had effectively damned a wellspring of treason. Brackenridge offers his own documentation of Carleton's attitude in a footnote referring generally to the governor's dealings with the Continental Congress:

⁵⁰Smith, p. 271, citing Carleton's letters to George Germain, British Secretary of State for the American colonies, 10 August, 1776 and to General Howe, 8 August, 1776.

In this, however, I am clear, that at least once or twice in his life, he has discovered in his language, some degree of venom and malignity. His speech, in this place, is little more than a bare translation of his most famous proclamation, and his answer to the letter of the Congress addressed to him, concerning his treatment of the prisoners in Canada. We can easily remember the good-natured epithets bestowed upon us in those very extraordinary compositions. Rebels, traitors, plunderers, murderers, paricides, lawless, faithless, perjured, base, ungrateful bloody-minded men, were the smooth terms he made use of. The Congress, in his opinion, were a contemptible set of men with whom no exchange of prisoners was to be made.⁵¹

Brackenridge effectively recasts the terms thus attributed to Carleton in a speech the spirit of which matches the contempt referred to in the documentation. Brackenridge almost brings to fruition the promise of human sacrifices reported by General Schuyler when he has the administrator select three "Bostonians" to be handed to the Indians for their horrifying rites. Again we see the subtle irony of Brackenridge. The governor keeps his promises, those made to the savages. The graphic depiction of the victims' sufferings serves to sustain anti-British feeling and to deepen the evil character of the play's antagonist. Brackenridge's exploitation of General Schuyler's letter finds its most dramatic articulation to provide a suspenseful moment of the play.

The captives' plea highlights another broken oath of a royal governor, thus casting aspersion on the honor of all Englishmen in the revolutionary struggle. That the men who

⁵¹D.G.M., p. 49.

had proved their imperviousness to such deprivation encountered on the march with Arnold to Quebec should recoil at the fiery torture promised by Carleton has its basis in the savagery the settlers had suffered at the hands of both the Indians and the British. The New Englanders, who formed a major part of Arnold's forces, had suffered most from this torment at the hands of marauding savages.⁵² Not only had Carleton ordered a cannonade on Sunday, 10 December, 1775, against the area in front of the troops, he demolished the houses outside the gates and burnt "a number of houses in one of which was a sick woman consumed."⁵³ The governor had burned a letter addressed to him by Montgomery just before the assault. Carleton ordered the bearer to return informing Montgomery that he would burn all messengers unless they came to entreat the King's mercy.⁵⁴ There was thus basis in fact both for the governor's threats and the captives' reactions to them.

Brackenridge has Carleton in an aside give his reason for not mistreating the prisoners and countermanding the order for burning the Indian captives as fear of reprisal from the

⁵²Smith, pp. 18-22, notes "Scarcely a village on the frontier of New Hampshire and Massachusetts was left unscathed . . . the outskirts of New York suffered the same horrors, and spots of blood and ashes reached far toward the centres of population." He also reports the roasting alive of a captive at Exeter, "Casco Bay resounded with savage yells and cries of agony."

⁵³Senter, p. 30.

⁵⁴W. Lindsay, "Invasion of Canada," Canadian Review, No. 5 (September, 1826), p. 89.

remnants of or a reinforced American army. In a footnote, the dramatist acknowledges that the governor treated the prisoners well until the fortunes of the Americans forced an end to the Canadian expedition. He also acknowledges that Montgomery's body had been buried with honor. To substantiate the villainy he has attributed to Carleton, however, Brackenridge cites from returning veterans the stories of scalping and burnings ordered by Carleton after the Americans' "unfortunate surrender at the Cedars." Being with Washington's army, the dramatist was in a position to meet these veterans and hear from them the horrors he documents. Contemporary letters, later researches and modern scholarship validate Brackenridge's charges about the Cedars prisoners,⁵⁵ thus justifying Brackenridge's threats from Carleton to his Quebec prisoners.

The remainder of his speech transforms the remission of his torture into a form of psychological revenge. Carleton insists that in emulation of his meek and patient monarch, who like the Biblical parent awaits the repentance of the prodigals, he will await their reform and return to the fold. However, the governor ends by threatening again with torture, scalping, and burning those who unlike the prodigals choose to remain

⁵⁵Smith, pp. 377-80 and Remarks XCV, pp. 594-96, in examining the mistreatment of these prisoners asserts that many were tortured, scalped and burned. Boatner, p. 191, minimizes the atrocities at the Cedars, "four or five were later tortured or killed by the savages."

in the outer darkness of hell. The idea of corporate guilt, so popularized by the Nazis in World War II, is employed to have the prisoners suffer for their erring countrymen.

The final speech of Morgan, who speaks now not only for the betrayed victims but for a betrayed country consists of a total denunciation of Carleton, and thus the British, by every living organism in creation. The sentient plant world, beasts and reptiles, and all nations join in the total condemnation of the oppressors. Scorned in this world, they will be despised in the next as even in Hell the name Englishman will identify the worst of the brood.

Brackenridge successfully met the challenge of dealing with a difficult subject by emphasizing character, thus motive and attitude; each act and scene contribute to his honorific intent. While for the most part he remains faithful to the historical fact, Brackenridge makes some alterations to subserve his theme or provide an insight into some rather uncomfortable events. The battle for Quebec provided no opportunity for parallel construction of scenes alternating between British and American forces, nor did he attempt to force the contrast of Montgomery's and Arnold's men into such a contrived structure. Instead he utilized the fate of the two columns to dramatize the heroic sacrifice of the fallen and to justify the American surrender. Thus he converted the tragic outcome of the battle to a play of dramatic intensity that served his artistic as well as polemic purposes.

His first two expository acts are expanded to tell of the proposed atrocities, to present not only the two commanders, but the younger segment of the forces as well. The presentiments of death arouse suspense for the younger members, and their idealization of Wolfe supports Montgomery's reverence for that storied hero. The references to the hardships endured by Arnold's men predisposes the reader to accept their later actions. In having the elder Macpherson speak through his son, Brackenridge shows his mature dramatic sense by employing such a device to symbolize the transfer of loyalties through the sword and to present the case of those former sons of Britain who were too maimed to fight.

The third act shows the dramatist's competence in handling a diversity of characters with differing views. The brisk dialogue of the first scene, the sensitive treatment of divergent religious views, and the attempt at reconciliation through the assurance of ultimate victory illustrate the dramatist's growing concern to provide a broader base of representation for the Americans. The brief scene between Hendricks and Arnold not only sets the mood for the Pennsylvania captain's tragic end, but provides a striking contrast between the hoary elder with trembling steps and the maimed but militant parent of the young Macpherson. Montgomery's projection of the actions of a living Wolfe avoids a long personal soliloquy for Montgomery and recapitulates the themes of atrocity, injured rights, and tyranny. Placing the legendary figure at

the head of the rebel forces not only prepares for his appearance but also presages the death of Montgomery.

The fourth act shows Brackenridge's heightened sense of the dramatic in choosing his material, but also illustrates that the dramatist had not yet matured in tailoring his material to suit the scenic structure. Arnold's address to his troops continues the theme of their valor and presents those practical considerations that motivate the warrior. The second scene, a mixture of so many moods and events should have been broken at the highest point of suspense, Montgomery's decision to go on in spite of the deserter's informing. Where Montgomery's death is too abrupt, Burr's lamentations are too protracted, destroying the effectiveness of the climax and casting doubt on the manifestation of General Wolfe.

The appearance of the shade redeems the author's intention, proving through his discourse that he is not a product of Burr's disordered mind but a dramatic device to predict as none of the participants of the battle could do the successful outcome of the war and the firm establishment of a new nation, replacing in structure the old, tyrannic monarchy and substituting instead a viable government insuring sound economic and aesthetic pursuits.

Brackenridge successfully handles the problem of the Americans' surrender and explication of the drama's theme, by making the distinction between a noble sacrifice of life and a senseless waste of life. In the surrender of the

Americans, he shifts the blame to the shoulders of the senior British official, proving that the enemy is relentless, cruel, and unChristian in its conduct of the war. The threat of Indian atrocities, so skillfully integrated in the preceeding scenes, is almost fulfilled, and Morgan matches Carleton's invectives with a ringing denunciation calculated to turn the capture of the colonists to the American's advantage.

In choosing his characters for the drama, Brackenridge was guided by historical imperatives. Both commanders had acquitted themselves well; thus not only the hero Montgomery is depicted, but also his colonial counterpart Arnold. Montgomery's background as recent arrival, bridegroom of three years, expectant father, and martyr through the tyranny he had witnessed on both sides of the Atlantic furnished appropriate ingredients for a hero to implement the dramatist's main theme. The brilliant Arnold who had directed the fighting from a hospital bed after the prisoners were taken provided a suitable counterpart of purely colonial background. The young Macpherson and Cheesman not only were killed in the same fire that felled the leader, but each youth had written home to tell his feelings about certain death. Cheesman set himself apart by his singular dress and burial money. The last person of the younger trio, Aaron Burr, through his survival, provided not only a credible witness to the bravery of the martyred trio but also somewhat balanced the casualties of Montgomery's

forces.

Since Arnold received his wound so early, inclusion of Morgan upon whom command devolved was mandatory. Choosing Oswald provided the dramatist with an enlisted man to give his drama a broader base of appeal and to shift the onus of surrender from the new leader's shoulders. The presence of the Chaplain at Quebec was not only historically accurate but allowed Brackenridge to inject some indication that the discouraging war was indeed in a just cause. Burr's survival redeems Montgomery's attack; Hendricks' death imparts to Arnold's column some of the immortal heroism attained by Montgomery's men.

The lesser figures Lamb, Meggs, Campbell and the Surgeon appear briefly to expand on a theme, provide a type of contrast, or further the action. Colonel Maclean, of the British forces, is utilized to bring the simultaneous actions of the two columns into perspective and provide an auditor for Carleton's aside.

For greatest dramatic impact, Brackenridge chose to present Governor Guy Carleton. Since Brackenridge states it was Carleton who made the pact with the Indians, a story current in the colonies, the governor's presence was necessary to carry out the inhuman terms of that agreement. As the senior officer of the opposing forces, surrender to him for the reason developed is far better theater than the historical reality. Given his attitude toward the rebels and the

correspondence Brackenridge refers to in his footnotes, exploitation of these feelings and actions provided a suitable antagonist for Montgomery and a logical person on whom to place the blame for surrender.

The ghost of General Wolfe haunts the grounds and many of the minds of the participants. His death also exemplifies the theme of dying for country. Through him Brackenridge links the old and new, provides a devastating comparison with the new British "honor" of Carleton, and offers a long-range view of the outcome of the war that the soldiers, naturally preoccupied with the impending battle, are incapable of foreseeing.

Although this battle lacked the romance of the Plains of Abraham when Wolfe and Montcalm were fatally wounded, in the character of Montgomery the Americans possessed a figure beloved and respected by both sides. Born in the north of Ireland of an ancient French family in 1736, Richard Montgomery entered the British army in 1754. During the French and Indian War he served with distinction, participating in the capture of Ticonderoga and Crown Point. In 1762 he was promoted to captain, but for a decade he advanced no further. During this period he became friendly with the Opposition in the British Parliament, gaining a reputation for being a liberal friend of the colonies. In 1772 he resigned from the army and emigrated to America to marry and settle down in Rhineback on the Hudson. "The will of an oppressed people compelled to

choose between liberty and slavery must be obeyed," he wrote to a friend.⁵⁶ In April, 1775 he was seated in the first New York Provincial Convention, and in June, on a unanimous recommendation from his colony, he became second in rank of the eight brigadier generals created by the Continental Congress. "I would most willingly decline any military command from a consciousness of a want of talents," he said to Robert Livingston, "nevertheless I shall sacrifice by own inclinations to the service of the public."⁵⁷

When news of Montgomery's death reached London, a subscription fund was set up for the "beloved American fellow subjects . . . inhumanely treated by the King's troops."⁵⁸ In Parliament, the speaker wept as he delivered the eulogy for the fallen general. Several days later, Carleton's brother-in-law, the Earl of Effingham, resigned his commission rather than fight against the colonies. Burke and Chatham called Montgomery a martyr for liberty. In his speech to the peers, Lord North, who certainly had little sympathy with the American cause, admitted that Montgomery was a "brave, humane and generous soldier." His rebellion North conceived as misguided rather than perditionous.⁵⁹

⁵⁶Smith, Our Struggle for the Fourteenth Colony: Canada and the American Revolution (New York, 1907), I, 367.

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 368.

⁵⁸Ibid.

⁵⁹The Annual Register (London, 1776), pp. 72 ff.

Montgomery was one of the three generals appointed to the Continental Army in 1775 who could properly be regarded as professional soldiers. Charles Lee, Horatio Gates, and Richard Montgomery had all been officers in the regular army, had seen service in the French and Indian War, and had remained with the regulars in the postwar period. Yet even among these professionals, experience in the upper echelons of command was quite limited.⁶⁰ With so few men of skill to draw from, the more important commands and the higher ranks often went to native-born sons whose substantial status and long history in colonial politics were more of a recommendation than military skill. Thus it was that when the Continental Congress asked the New York Provincial Congress to nominate an officer to command the American troops in that province, Philip Schuyler, successful in business, leader in the Assembly, and extensive property holder, received the recommendation:

On a general in America, fortune also should bestow her gifts that he may rather communicate lustre to his dignities than receive it and that his country, his property, his kindred and connections, may have sure pledges that he will faithfully perform the duties of his high office and readily lay down his power when the general weal requires it.⁶¹

Acting on this recommendation, Congress appointed Schuyler as

⁶⁰ Billias, p. xiii.

⁶¹ Journals of the Provincial Congress, Provincial Convention, Committee of Safety and Council of Safety of the State of New York, 1775-1776-1777 (Albany, 1842), I, 33.

one of the four major generals under Washington on June 19, 1775.⁶²

General Schuyler was put in charge of the Canadian campaign, but became ill at St. Johns, making his return to a more clement climate necessary. Montgomery took command of the troops composed of flinty New Englanders, whom the locum tenens commander considered poorly disciplined and totally lacking the arts of European warfare. Montgomery's British orientation led him to insist upon traditional conduct from nonprofessional soldiers in the hard and unfamiliar circumstances of Canada. In spite of the differences in attitudes, Montgomery, a "brilliant and resourceful officer, went on to capture St. Johns and Montreal in quick succession."⁶³ Upon his arrival at Quebec, those who had remained with him,⁶⁴ had become welded into a successful fighting unit who looked to Richard Montgomery for inspiration as well as guidance. Considering the obstacles, his conduct of the Canadian expedition was remarkably efficient.

The character of General Montgomery unfolds in its many aspects throughout the play: sensitive human being, loving husband and father, brave soldier, and loyal patriot.

⁶²John H. G. Pell, "Philip Schuyler: The General as Aristocrat," Billias, pp. 55-58.

⁶³Ibid., p. 62.

⁶⁴A large part of his army had returned to their homes when their enlistments expired, Wallace, p. 172.

Although Montgomery's decision to attack on the stormy evening is compounded of his practical knowledge of the volunteers' expiration of duty and the element of surprise, Montgomery shows a keen appreciation of the role of Nature in assisting the Americans that is most personal in expression:

The third hour turning from the midnight watch,
By no ray visited of moon or star,
Marks to our enterprize, its proper date.
Now from above, on every hill and copse,
The airy element, descends in snow,
And the dark winds, from the howling north,
Commit'd and driven on the bounded fight,
Gives tumult privacy, and shrouds the match;
So that our troops, in reg'ment or brigade,
May undistinguish'd, to the very walls,
Move up secure, and scale the battlements:
May force the barr'd gates, of this lofty town,
On all sides, bound, with artificial rock,
Of cloud-cap'd eminence, impregnable.⁶⁵

His view of the field that saw the encounter of the mighty Wolfe is highly idealized, assuming almost Arthurian overtones in his depiction of the combatants:

It seem to me, Macpherson, that we tread,
The ground of some romantic fairy land,
Where Knights in armour and high combatants,
Have met in war.⁶⁶

Having seen the results of war, his thoughts are on the effects of defeat not only for his own family, but for those who will experience the unfortunate effects of the conqueror's occupation. In the short soliloquy that closes the third

⁶⁵D.G.M., pp. 9-10.

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 14.

scene of the first act, he bemoans the fate that may await his defenseless wife and unborn child at the hands of the Indians. To his troops he voices his fears of war's innocents should the colonists fail to drive the British from their shores:

No standing army shall remain, to spoil
The daughters virgin innocence, or bathe
Their hands, in the sons blood relentlessly.⁶⁷

These domestic preoccupations serve to humanize the martyr-hero.

This concern for family finds its finest expression as Montgomery is revealed as pater familias to the young idealists who have joined the revolution. His conversation with Macpherson tells of his presentiment of death, a subject only those close in spirit could ever broach. The barriers of age melt as the older, experienced soldier confides to his young attendant that their fates may be joined in death as in life that very day. His speech becomes comforting words of acceptance of what a loving Father sends His children rather than the cold words of consolation in accepting the inevitable:

But yet methinks, Macpherson, that I feel,
Within this hour, some knowledge of my end,
Some sure presentiment, that you and I,
This day, shall be with them, shall leave,
Our breathless bodies on this mortal soil.
But this allotment, should it be our case,
Fear not young soldier, for our cause is just,
And all those failings we are conscious of,
Shall in the bosom, of our God repose,

⁶⁷Ibid., p. 29.

Who looks with mercy, on the sons of men,
 And hides, their imperfections, with his love.
 Say not young soldier, that thy life was short,
 In the first bloom, of manhood, swift cut off.
 All things are mortal, but the warriors fame;
 This lives eternal, in the mouths of men.⁶⁸

Not only is the youth assured of heavenly reward, but his deeds will have won him eternal fame on earth. This view of the after-life envisions their friendship deepening through the common death that has forged their fate.

Montgomery's last words are to the youth Cheesman, expressing gratitude for the lad's insistence on joining him in the perilous assault. His last act is to lead the charge himself to be an inspiration to those youths who revere him.

Cheesman's urgings to Montgomery also reveal the high respect in which the young hold him. The New York captain epitomizes the regard the men have for their leader, calling him the "head and source of action" whose loss would spell defeat for the campaign. Macpherson responds to Montgomery's confidences by confiding in him as he would to his own father his dreams of participating in the glories of a hero's reward. It is Burr, however, who articulates the respect for the general's leadership and the tragedy of his loss. In response to Macpherson on the matter of the assault, Burr praises the audacity of the plan to attack and the courage of the man who will inspire the men by his personal leadership. At the scene of Montgomery's death, it is his

⁶⁸Ibid., p. 15.

anguished cries of "Father, father" that signify the relationship for the youthful idealists together with his staying on the field as an orphaned son to wake the parent whose death has left him bereft. The reactions of these youths are far more telling in their depiction of character than Montgomery's own words.

Brackenridge's finest and most perceptive characterization is Montgomery as soldier and patriot. The story of the savages' cannibalism to be slaked with the blood of his fellow patriots falls first from this soldier, horrified at the demonic alliance the enemy have made to effect their victory. The horror of these barbarians not bound by Christian rules of conducting war and the profanation of the sacrament mark Montgomery's opening speech and punctuate his later utterances with the same horror:

Are we the offspring of that cruel foe,
Who late, at Montreal, with symbol dire,
Did call, the Savages, to taste of blood,
Life-warm, and streaming, from the bullock slain,
And with fell language, told it was the blood,
Of a Bostonian, made the sacrament?
At this, the Hell-hounds, with infernal gust,
To the snuff'd wind, held up, their blood-stain'd mouths,
And fill'd, with howlings, the adjacent hills.⁶⁹

This abhorrence for men who fight in such satanic fashion is balanced by reverence for the soldier hero Wolfe, the embodiment of his military ideals. Montgomery's own fate provides a sharp contrast to the fate of those noble warriors who fell

⁶⁹Ibid., p. 10. See also pp. 16, 27, 30, 35.

in honest combat:

This is the plain where Wolfe
Victorious Wolfe, fought with the brave Montcalm;
And even yet, the dreary snow-clad tomb,
Of many a hero, slaughter'd on that day,⁷⁰
Recals the memory, of the bloody strife.

Montgomery reflects this admiration for Wolfe, as inspired by Wolfe's love of justice he plans his campaign as surrogate for the fallen hero:

If Wolfe had liv'd, would he have drawn his sword,
In Britain's cause—in her unrighteous cause,
To chain the American, and bind him down?
O no, his soul, by Nature elegant,
With liberal sentiment and knowledge, stor'd,
Would not have suffered it; I rather think,
Nay, I well know it, that himself had led,
Perhaps, once more, an army to Quebec,
To drive these tyrants out. He had obey'd,
Rather, the dictates of an upright soul,
Than the commandment of a tyrant King.⁷¹

But Montgomery is a leader in his own right, never faltering in his plans or confidence. It is he who devises the two-pronged attack. It is he who decides to continue the assault in spite of the deserter's betrayal of the American plans. So dedicated is he that the tardiness of the American troops is incomprehensible to him. Refusing to let himself or his new found country be disgraced by the infamy of cowardice, Montgomery offers himself as a sacrifice to the cause, hoping that such an alternative will indeed spur on the troops:

⁷⁰Ibid., p. 14.

⁷¹Ibid., p. 27.

Come on my gallant countrymen, come on;
 Or if you come not on, at least do this;
 Advance to me, and in this deep-pain'd breast
 Pour one sure shot, and ease my amazed soul,
 By bleeding soul, of what I feel for you.
 Move on, my countrymen, move on;
 I first, myself, will in the charge advance.⁷²

In this most dramatic action, Brackenridge tempers the iron-clad discipline of the professional Montgomery with the understanding and compassion he had gained for these colonists who for the most part were a citizen army abruptly thrust by events into service. At the first signs of their reluctance, the general feels that he can overcome their incipient cowardice with the example of his personal bravery in leading the assault. The announcement of the American deserter calls not forth a stinging denunciation of the culprit, but instead fires the general to pass over the defection and concentrate on urging the troops to victory. Having taken the first redoubt, Montgomery's consternation increases as the men still hang back; therefore, he uses a variety of means to buoy up the flagging spirits of the men. The ease of taking the first redoubt is announced, followed by the recital of the troops' recent victories in the northern cold. The spectre of cowardice is obliquely referred to by their leader who urges them to avoid the shame their tardiness will bring. He enlarges the scope of his reasons to proceed by promising the Canadians will become their allies in victory, but will fall prey to the

⁷²Ibid., p. 35.

savages and the tyrants in defeat. Before making his drastic appeal, Montgomery caps his arguments with a moving, succinct appeal for preservation of their values and for redress of their wrongs that place an obligation of them to continue:

By all that lives in man, of noble fortitude,
 By this your country, and those natal ties,
 Which binds the memory to the place of birth;
 By your spoil'd liberty, and injur'd rights;
 By the religion, which you owe to God;
 By your own safety, and the love of life,
 Come on my gallant countrymen, come on;⁷³

Montgomery's keen insight and expertise in the handling of all his men demonstrates Brackenridge's ability to give us a character of full dimension. With his fellow commander, Arnold, Montgomery exhibits the deference and diplomacy needed to operate a joint venture with one so different in background and temperament. He acknowledges the hardships Arnold's men have suffered in the long trail to Quebec. The planning council is marked with Montgomery's consideration for his subordinate. Deference to the Chaplain's calling is shown when Montgomery asks for an invocation although the exigencies of the situation would have justified omitting this. Montgomery's allowing the Chaplain to be armed in the battle reveals the general's keen appreciation of the warrior spirit. But in allowing the cleric to take the sword, Montgomery displays his high opinion of the sacred calling that marks his perception as a Christian gentleman and his appreciation of the

⁷³Ibid.

ministry in his world view of man's destiny:

I love a clergy-man, the aid-de-camp,
As I may say, of the great God, to man;
Or rather him that holds the flag of truce,⁷⁴
And tells of mercy to the sin-stain'd soul.⁷⁴

But as a newcomer, so soon from those shores that have housed the oppressive government, he is able to command the respect and adulation of the younger members who view him as confident, head and source of action, and father. In his portrayal of Montgomery's relationship with this group lies Brackenridge's greatest triumph of characterization.

Montgomery's patriotism has demanded that the sword he sheathed to cultivate his own patch of land in the New World now be wielded against a country whose aims he had once supported and against his former comrades in arms. Forsaking his wife of three years and knowing that he may never live to see his child, he assumes command of a ragamuffin army and tries to effect the Congress' daring scheme, the successful invasion of Canada. This outstanding patriot who is the hero of the drama lived and died in comparative obscurity when one considers the career of his counterpart, the leader of the second column, Benedict Arnold.

The earlier military career of the man whose name is now synonymous with traitor shows no indication of those cowardly, selfaggrandizing traits one imputes to the stereotype. Son of a distinguished Rhode Island family who had settled in Connecticut, Benedict Arnold had fought with his

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 32.

militia for a brief time in the French and Indian War. Having served his apprenticeship as an apothecary, he bought shares in a number of ships and soon developed a lively trade with Canada, the West Indies, and Central America, for a time sailing as one of his own shipmasters. Like many merchants of the period, he resorted to smuggling in defiance of British customs laws and became a leader of the more radical element in New Haven.⁷⁵ Elected captain of a militia company in 1774, he marched his company to Cambridge upon hearing the news of Lexington. Here he proposed the capture of Fort Ticonderoga and seizure of its cannon. Named a colonel by Massachusetts on May 3, 1775, he was authorized to raise a regiment and proceed with his plan. However, when Ethan Allen and his men were assigned the task, Arnold joined as a volunteer in the successful attack. Afterward with a hundred men, he seized a ship and ran down Lake Champlain and captured St. Johns. Upon his return to Cambridge, Washington gave him command of an expedition to Quebec via the Maine wilderness, where he was to join with General Montgomery in the taking of that city.⁷⁶

Although wounded early in the battle, he continued to besiege the city until spring, when he was forced to retreat

⁷⁵Wallace, pp. 163-65.

⁷⁶Senter's Journal furnishes an interesting account of the deprivations and successes of the journey north. Particularly of note are the relations of Arnold with his men and officers, the men usually subordinate to him, the officers polarized into admirers and detractors.

to Montreal and Lake Chaplain. He returned home a hero and was promoted to brigadier general in February, 1776, but the enmities he had aroused in several of his officers affected later promotion. When in February, 1777, Congress created five new major generals, Arnold, the ranking brigadier, was passed over in favor of his juniors. Washington was able to dissuade him from resigning, attributing the promotions to the political necessity of apportionment among the states. However, his daring and brilliant exploits of that year resulted in his promotion and restoration of linear precedence. Again severely wounded, he was placed in command of Philadelphia in June, 1778, where his activities resulted ultimately in the betrayal of his country.⁷⁷

Because of this disgrace his contributions to the American cause have for the most part been ignored or forgotten. Fortunately, Brackenridge's play affords us an insight into the man at a time when his life was free of those compelling forces that caused his betrayal and when his erratic genius was content to be guided and instructed by a superior. Prior to their rendezvous, Arnold had been able to communicate regularly with the senior commander, who was as careful to communicate with his junior. In this way, a close understanding came to be established.⁷⁸ The dramatist, while

⁷⁷Wallace, pp. 165-84.

⁷⁸Smith, II, 85.

not diminishing the stature of the hero Montgomery, portrays a native son, who while lacking the formal training and experience of Montgomery, acquitted himself with honor and valor. To do this, Brackenridge chooses those qualities which made Arnold singularly the American, militia-trained commander. Where Montgomery speaks of the "savages," Arnold amplifies the Englishman's knowledge with a catalogue of the indigenous tribes and their habits:

Yes, brave Montgomery, I have heard the tale;
When from the brow, of many a desert wood,
And wolf-resounding mountain top, came down
The yelling Savage. Onondago wild,
Fierce Outawae, and half extinguish'd brood,
Of aged Huron native habitant,
Of those high plains, where long their wigwams stood,
And margined the banks of Quebec's streams.
With these the Mohawk, from the nether lakes,
Oneida, Shawnese, and an hundred names
Of uncouth accent.⁷⁹

Far more conscious of the role of the citizen than the professional Montgomery, Arnold follows up the newcomer's praise of his column by detailing their trek through the wilderness, naming rivers, the rugged terrain, and the deprivations that beset them:

And since, in common, with th' embodied force,
Have borne sharp famine, and severest toil,
While up the rapid Kennebec, they stem'd,
Th' impetuous torrent, or at carrying place,
O'er broad morass, deep swamp, and craggy wild,
Urg'd their rough way. Thence over hill,
And dreary mountain top, to where Chaudiere
Doth mix his wave, and with the Saint Lawrence tide.

⁷⁹D.G.M., p. 11.

And now encamp'd on the Abraham heights,
Await your orders to attack the town;⁸⁰

His relations with the officers and men reflect the comraderie developed in the militia. As Hendricks begs to fight in the vanguard rather than command the rear guard action, Arnold grants this request to share in the glory in the spirit of one colonist assisting another rather than as a superior granting the request of a subordinate. In urging his troops to battle, he demonstrates that native, Yankee shrewdness that could be called American pragmatism. Referring not to discipline that must order their conduct, he stresses the skills that the men have learned in their ordinary pursuits:

Some rifle-men,
Advance before, in silent ambushade,
And pick them from that eminence. Long us'd
To strew the swift deer on the mountain top,
You need no council to direct your fire,
Save this, brave souls, take down their officers.⁸¹

Before the battle begins, Arnold inflames the men with a desire for victory in the most practical terms he knows. The men have suffered untold hardships to reach the city, hardships that will be in vain if they fail now. The British have lost the will to fight and now seek the coward's refuge in their walled town. His final argument to men torn from their homes cannot be assailed:

Shall we brave souls,
Ly on the cold ground, thus unsheltered
From rain, deep snow, and binding ice, and storm,
With but Heaven's canopy, while they possess

⁸⁰Ibid., p. 13.

⁸¹Ibid., p. 41.

Yon noble buildings; chearful residence?
 On then my countrymen, and drive them out,
 To us, surrendering up the ample halls,
 Aspiring domes, and structures of Quebec.⁸²

The Arnold who had seen his plan for capture of an important British post executed by another man is the same Arnold who bows to the will of the ex-Englishman in the plan for the assault. There is no hint of rebellion or wish to supercede in command. Calmly he accepts Montgomery's plan to attack after the storm, and all his discourses to the troops are in support of that enterprise. Although Arnold agrees that the storm will provide cover, his view of Nature is not the romantic one that Montgomery espouses. Instead he considers the elements in their effect on the Americans as well as the foe:

But Quebec soon possess'd by us,
 Shall amply recompense the watching, cold,
 Famine, and labour, which we have sustain'd;
 And yet sustain, while with the wintry year,
 We now contend, digging the ice-bound soil,
 In deep entrenchment, and laboriously
 Erecting batt'ries of hard frost congeal'd,
 'Midst arrowy sleet, and face-corroding storm.⁸³

Arnold too, has reverence for Wolfe; however, this Englishman's legendary exploits do not inspire the American commander to long reflections. At the sound of the first shot, his musings on Wolfe are interrupted, and the American leader with

⁸²Ibid., p. 28.

⁸³Ibid., p. 13.

that quick, incisive action that won promotions for him later on, faces the present danger with sharp orders, marshalling of men, and words to those men that buttress their confidence. Arnold's final act of bravery confirms the image of the hero still untarnished at the drama's publication. Severely wounded, the commander of the second force refuses to leave while a drop of blood remains to give him the life to fight. It is an unconscious leader that is finally removed from the field.

Although the play celebrates the hero and martyr Montgomery, Brackenridge capitalizes on the contrast offered by the two commanders. Montgomery, the transplanted Englishman, former son of Britain, hero of the French and Indian War, is an inspiration to all whose Tory inclinations would have them opt for loyalty to a country that had once sustained them. Montgomery's very acts of moving to the New World and assuming command of the American forces were a repudiation of a government turned corrupt. The dramatist develops his character as devoted family man, outraged observer of the contemporary scene, sensitive nature lover, soldier and patriot. These qualities are incorporated in a rationalist who has a grasp of the political overview of the situation. Because Montgomery is all things to all men, he is able to "Fire every bosom with a martial glow." Brackenridge allows the various facets of the hero's personality to evolve in his dealings with his officers, his actions, and his effect upon the people most

directly concerned with him.

Brackenridge's skill in handling two disparate personalities is displayed in his control of Arnold as enthusiastic subordinate, leader of his own column, quick to act in time of crisis, and beloved by his own men and officers. Arnold provides sufficient contrast to the dead hero and reason for glory to those who can identify with a born colonial in Brackenridge's faithful portrait of the former militia leader, at once bold and submissive, sensitive to the needs and capabilities of his rude troops, and willing to expend his last efforts in obtaining the objective. The dramatist maintains the delicate balance of honoring a British-born hero and martyr while managing to vaunt the bravery of the militia-trained army leader without diminishing the stature of either.

Of the men in Montgomery's column, Brackenridge chose to include two who would contribute directly to his theme of glory in dying for one's country and one whose intimate acquaintance with Montgomery as his aide would enable him to glorify the martyred general. Thus Aaron Burr functions not only as a valiant survivor of the battle, but as a valid witness to the brave men who perished with Montgomery.

Burr's father had served as a member of the Board of Trustees when the College of New Jersey was founded. As the second president of the college, 1748-57, Reverend Burr set up the first definite course of study, rules of conduct,

entrance requirements, and supervised construction of Nassau Hall, the first permanent college building in Princeton Borough. His son, who was to become a vice president of the republic, entered the sophomore class at the College of New Jersey in 1769 at the age of thirteen. Thus Brackenridge had the opportunity to know Burr as a fellow student. Even as a schoolboy, Burr was noted for being tempestuous and emotional. Under the tutelage of Dr. Witherspoon, he could not get along with the minister who did not approve of revivals, and in 1774 Burr abandoned theology for law. Less than a year later, the nineteen year old youth was fighting as a captain under Arnold on his way to Quebec.⁸⁴ At the rendezvous at Quebec Burr was transferred to Montgomery as a second aide.⁸⁵

Brackenridge channels Burr's tempestuousness into anger and impatience to fight the British and only allows an emotional display when Burr finds his dead comrades fallen with the general. We first see the aide in conversation with Macpherson, inspired by the "high invention" of the plan to attack and confident of victory because of Montgomery's personal leadership. His unbounded enthusiasm for the

⁸⁴Charles Burr Todd, A General History of the Burr Family (Boston, 1902), pp. 76-79. See also Matthew L. Davis, Memoirs of Aaron Burr (Philadelphia, 1836-37), I, 49.

⁸⁵Smith, II, 116.

general stirs him to the heights of impatience as he waits for the attack to begin. In Burr's impassioned speech citing British injustices, Brackenridge indicates the latent impetuosity which later led to Burr's vendetta against Hamilton and his wild schemes of collaboration with the traitor Willard:

O, I have long impatient, waited it;
 And indignation, brac'd up every nerve,
 When I have thought, of this fell British foe,
 Who still insatiate, with full revenue,
 Drawn from our commerce to their shores confin'd,
 Must needs enslave us, and mark all their own.
 Whether we land possess, or property,
 Of freer nature; still at their command,
 We must resign it, and content ourselves,
 With some peculium, slave-like article,
 Which these our masters, may vouchsafe to give.⁸⁶

Burr's anger is held in check as he urges the men to fight and follow his hero to preserve their fame. Only the sight of the fallen general unhinges him temporarily as he cries out in anguish to pour his soul into the "bleeding veins." Although his idea of showing his clothes soaked in Montgomery's blood would be valuable propaganda and incentive for a dispirited nation, his unrealistic desire to stay to protect the corpses shows an excessive lack of reason difficult to credit. One can feel the loss he suffers for his companions, but his repeated desire to wake the corpses is not only unrealistic but totally ineffective. However, his invocation to their shades now haunting the battlefield would be in accord with the emotional trait attributed to him. Surprisingly, in his

⁸⁶D.G.M., pp. 19-20.

welcome to the apparition, Burr dwells not on his fallen idol but on Macpherson for whom he so far has not shown that much attachment. Brackenridge had selected an excellent instrument for his introduction to the shade of Wolfe, but Burr's excessive emotionalism would have the readers attribute the appearance to Burr's own disordered mind rather than the real manifestation the dramatist intended. The character who had started out with such promise, deteriorates in this climactic scene.

The other two men of Montgomery's column complete a youthful set of the idealistic young, the aide Captain John Macpherson and Captain Jacob Cheesman of New York. The brooding Macpherson lacks the gaiety with which young Cheesman accepts the premonition of his own fatality, viewing it rather as a necessary part of the mystique of revolution. During the siege Macpherson had written to a friend his desire for total participation in the events being enacted. He wished "the roughs as well as the smooths of a soldiers life."⁸⁷ In the letter to his father telling of his premonition, the young rebel had added:

I experience no reluctance in this cause,
to venture such a life which I consider is
only lent when my country demands it.⁸⁸

Brackenridge uses this brooding aspect of the Scot's personality

⁸⁷Macpherson, "Letter to George Read," 16 December, 1775 in W. T. Read, Life and Correspondence of George Read (New York, 1870), p. 115.

⁸⁸Macpherson, "Letter to Father," in Le Moine, p. 208.

to emphasize the calm manner in which a young man accepts death. His musings allow him to act as the medium through which his maimed father speaks to the colonies of the injustice and ingratitude he has suffered from a government to which he had been so completely loyal. It is young Macpherson's admiration for Wolfe, which could have been engendered only by oral tradition, that further adds to the foundation for the shade's appearance.

Cheesman is an obscure figure, chiefly noteworthy for his unusual attitude toward death. In dressing in his best to meet his end, he provides a striking contrast to Montgomery's aide who maintains a solemn attitude of resignation. Carrying money for his burial stresses the impractical side of the young revolutionary and evokes mixed feeling of pity and admiration for the idealist. He, like Macpherson, idealizes the great Wolfe, whose purchase of enduring fame he feels sure he will emulate.

In utilizing the story of these heroes Brackenridge avoids saturating his drama with paragons whose reactions to forebodings of death duplicate lofty sentiments and noble actions. Where one would expect a mature general to reflect on his family, the inexperienced youths have only the abstract comfort of everlasting fame to encourage them. Brackenridge not only allows Macpherson to muse on the fame that awaits him, but through his near trance-like state, permits a vengeful father to speak through him about the injustices

suffered by those unable to fight. In desiring to carry out his oath, Macpherson impatiently waits to fulfill his destiny, anticipating that he will cause many of the foe to share his fate. Cheesman's highly individual reaction sets him apart from the other two and from any stylized hero so fated.

Far more tragic is the death of their counterpart in Arnold's column, Captain William Hendricks. For this cameo role, Brackenridge presented several facets of the personality of the young captain: his faith, his concern for his men, his pride in his own colony, his love for his home and family, and his personal bravery. Thus the dramatist draws a full-length portrait of the soldier who while wishing to live out a peaceful life on the banks of the Susquehannah, actually chose death by his request for change in battle station.

In his first appearance, Hendricks manifests that supreme faith in the Providence of God that reflects his own strict Presbyterian upbringing.⁸⁹ In the disputation between the Chaplain and Oswald on Divine intervention, Hendricks takes no part, leaving the ordained minister to answer the taunts. Just as the youth had desired to be first with Arnold, he wishes his own contingent to show supremacy in

⁸⁹Hendricks was a descendant of one of the first Scotch-Irish settlers in the Cumberland Valley, Tobias Hendricks, who settled within three miles of the Susquehannah in 1727, Dunaway, p. 60.

battle by being first to scale the walls in Pennsylvania's name and planting the flag for the colony. Offering a reward of one hundred dollars in bills or gold indicates the adverse conditions under which his men had stayed with Arnold. The money granted by the Congress to finance the campaign had been in the keeping of the Connecticut leader. As the resources dwindled, so too did the rations and the pay of the men. After a vigorous protest by Morgan and Hendricks, the men's rations were increased, but back pay was not forthcoming. Hendricks may have secured the bullion in a raid on the homes of the absent Tory landlords in the environs of Quebec, an act for which Arnold later had to answer.⁹⁰ As submissive to the Will of God as he is, Hendricks wistfully expresses his desire to return to his beloved Susquehannah to live out his life in tending to his father and resuming his pastoral existence. He envisions begetting progeny to continue the name and the proud traditions of the family:

Then shall the youth,
Encircling me, request the hoary tale,
Of this fam'd siege; who first assail'd the wall-
What warriors fell-who wounded in the attack-
How long 'twas fought-and how we gain'd the town.⁹¹

Thus motivated, he asks for and receives a place in the first advance that results in his death.

In this brief role, Brackenridge draws one of his

⁹⁰Bird, pp. 156-60, 176-79.

⁹¹D.G.M., p. 25.

most poignant portraits. The youth, bubbling with life but willing to accept death, captures the fancy of the audience through his concern for his father, his friends, and his regional pride which surfaces at the walls to lead him to his death. Perhaps it is this total commitment to life that arouses more sympathy for Hendricks than the reactions of Cheesman and Macpherson.

Although Brackenridge was for the most part faithful to the historical personages whom he chose to include in his drama, the case of Captain Daniel Morgan required a different approach. Although much of Morgan's early life is shrouded in mystery, he is generally considered the son of Welsh immigrants who lived in New Jersey at the time of his birth about 1735. At seventeen the restless, high-spirited youth after a quarrel with his father fled to the frontier, settling in a remote western settlement of Winchester, Virginia. When the French had started moving forces south to Canada and to make good their King's claim to the Ohio Valley, Morgan, a teamster, secured employment from Major General Edward Braddock, sent from England to repulse the French tide. His fiery nature early showed itself when after a reprimand from a redcoat, the volatile teamster knocked the man down, an offense which brought a drum-head court martial sentence of several hundred lashes. Morgan learned another lesson from the campaign when Braddock suffered his catastrophic defeat near the Monongahela River. Braddock's vain attempt to

maintain line fire and regular formations against his French and Indian assailants, fighting from behind trees, bushes, and rocks, proved that European military methods were often futile in a wilderness setting. Once Morgan was shot through the mouth and narrowly escaped death when he eluded capture by the Indians.

After the war his care-free, brawling, debt-ridden years ended with his common-law marriage, and his personality underwent a marked change. He settled down, purchased a farm, acquired some slaves, and began enjoying a more prosperous and peaceful existence. The justices of the peace appointed him to several minor administrative posts, and in 1771 he was made captain in the militia. By the eve of the Revolution, the forty-year old Morgan had been tested and tempered as a frontier fighter, becoming proficient with the scalping knife and tomahawk, in addition to the so-called Kentucky rifle, a long, slender weapon designed by German gunsmiths. Thus when Virginia was asked to supply two of the ten companies of light infantry, Daniel Morgan was selected to head one of them. After reporting to General Washington, Morgan was selected as the commander of one of three rifle companies to march with Arnold to invade Canada.⁹² Senter, in his Journal, pays tribute to the rough frontiersman whose skill and daring placed him for the most part in the advance

⁹²Higginbotham, pp. 292-95.

of most of the expeditions.⁹³ As has been noted, after Arnold was wounded, command of his column somehow devolved upon the shoulders of this able fighter.

Brilliant and colorful as Morgan was, Brackenridge chose to temper his fiery nature and cast him in the role of subordinate who, giving into the pleas of Oswald, surrenders Arnold's column. His leadership is displayed in the request for direction from the men as he announces his assumption of command. Couched as it is, the men have no alternative but to demand that he lead them on to the rendezvous:

Next in command on me devolves the task
Of Generalship; then may I pray from you
Obedience prompt, in this fair enterprise?
Say, shall I draw you off ingloriously,
With speediest step? or shall we yet advance,
And pour revenge on the indignant foe?
Think, Gentlemen, it will be base to leave
The brave Montgomery, who on the other wall
By this time storming, will expect our aid,
And rendezvous in the besieged town.⁹⁴

Relying on the effectiveness of the rifles, he orders the attack by Hendricks and his rifle company on the first barrier. Success crowns this selection, giving Hendricks one taste of glory before his fatal wound. Although Morgan's surrender is not in accord with the facts nor to be expected from one of his temperament, the alteration of the facts suited Brackenridge's purposes. Somehow the American prisoners had

⁹³Senter, pp. 7, 8, 12, ff.

⁹⁴D.G.M., p. 42.

to be accounted for. Allowing Morgan to surrender after the false promises of the royal governor and upon the urgings of Arnold's secretary not to waste lives was about the only way the dramatist could reconcile his theme and the fact of the surrender. It is noble to die for one's country; it is foolish to waste one's life in senseless slaughter. Thus Brackenridge further consecrates Montgomery's sacrifice and those who died in the assault. He leaves open to speculation the fate of the column had not Arnold been taken from command.⁹⁵ In Carleton's broken oath, the dramatist further vilifies the English commander and shifts blame for capitulation from Morgan to his own shoulders. In Morgan's final speech, which also closes the play, Brackenridge does pay tribute to that fiery aspect of the frontiersman whom Indians, redcoats, and nature could not conquer. To him he leaves the stinging denunciation of the perfidious enemy and all who espouse his cause by inveighing against British cruelty which will merit divine and hellish retribution on judgment day.

It is unfortunate that the rude frontiersman could not have been exploited for the colorful character that he in fact was. However, conscious of his theme and his loyalty

⁹⁵Higginbotham, p. 298, commenting on Morgan's surrender: "Morgan's anguish must have deepened when he later learned he had been accurate about the confusion among the British during the initial stages of the battle. A British officer declared that had Arnold's column pushed on as Morgan urged, the city might possibly have fallen."

to the unities which he stressed in his "Preface," the dramatist had no other choice than to depress that fiery individualism of Morgan and cast him as he did.

To round out his cast of Americans and further the action, Brackenridge was free to include those who suited his polemic purposes in a variety of ways. His shrewdest choice is the inclusion of the Chaplain, identified in the Dramatis Personae as the Reverend Samuel Spring. The young minister had studied theology under John Witherspoon at the College of New Jersey, obtaining his degree with Brackenridge in 1771.⁹⁶ Four years later the Congregationalist clergyman joined the Continental Army as chaplain of Arnold's Canadian expedition. After the war, as pastor of the Congregational Church of Newburyport, Massachusetts, Mr. Spring gained a reputation as an extreme Calvinist who opposed the ascending Unitarian sect.⁹⁷

His days with the Canadian expedition showed no such inflexibility, however. On Christmas day, the Sunday before the attack, Reverend Spring had preached a sermon in the

⁹⁶This is the same Samuel Spring that was the subject of Brackenridge's #7, "Spring's Confession to Will McCorkle, A Popish Priest," "Satires against the Tories."

⁹⁷Gardiner Spring, Personal Reminiscences of the Life and Times of Gardiner Spring (Boston, 1866), pp. 18-29, contains a biographical account of the author's father.

"popish chapel of the nunnery" where Arnold's troops were quartered. In his sermon he elaborated on the strength of the Assyrians being "an arm of the flesh," while God fought for the people of Hezekiah of Judah.⁹⁸ Brackenridge's characterization incorporates this earlier, less rigid attitude that Spring evidenced by speaking among the graven images. The dramatist develops an enlightened clergyman whose views can accommodate the broad spectrum of opinion engendered by the deistic influences prevalent at the time. Although he agrees with Oswald that the God of the Old Testament does not now disrupt Nature to aid men, he includes the views of those leaning toward Calvinistic orthodoxy by insisting on the Providence of God operative in the affairs of men:

I grant, sweet youth, we may not hope from heav'n,
That sudden vengeance of red fiery wrath,
To blast the foe; but yet the Almighty reigns,
O'er every act, and enterprize of man,
To frown upon, or bless it with his smile.⁹⁹

But wishing to reconcile the position of the enlightened thinkers of the time, he pictures God as a subtle manager of the universe who uses Nature in its regular course and subject to its own laws to implement His divine plan:

He unperceiv'd, can from the unchanged course,
Of Nature's settled laws, with ease bring forth,
Events particular; with equal ease,

⁹⁸Bird, pp. 191-92. In The Battle of Bunkers-Hill, Brackenridge has Warren draw the same comparisons.

⁹⁹D.G.M., p. 22.

As when its mount, the mighty ocean pass'd,
In Noah's day and deluged.¹⁰⁰

The Reverend Spring then points out that the fog and clouds have aided the general by masking the attack so that the foe will indeed be surprised. So that there can be no doubt about the real force that is the causative factor in life, the Chaplain reiterates:

The Almighty reigns, distributing to each,
That which we call our lot, Not one hair falls
Of our head, to the ground, but it is numbered.
He reigns, and gives to innocence, its due reward,
But to the guilty, punishment and death.¹⁰¹

Having proven that Gods reigns supreme, the Chaplain gives hope for ultimate victory to the rebels:

A firm persuasion, hath possess'd my mind,
That this fair cause, shall triumph finally;
But the complection, of the ensuing hour,
We cannot tell. It may be fortunate,
And yet as partial to the whole event,
It may be clouded, and deep wrought in woe.¹⁰²

When asked for the invocation by Montgomery, the Chaplain continues in the same vein, praying to the God of the elements to assist the Americans; he also asks that God turn the heart of the King from the collision course he and his Parliament have embarked upon. With an abrupt change of testaments, the cleric asks for the cleansing Blood of the Redeemer to purify those who will be taken in battle and

¹⁰⁰Ibid.

¹⁰¹Ibid., p. 23.

¹⁰²Ibid.

strengthen the resolve of the Americans if God should not choose to grant victory that day. Far from the passive nature he has so far displayed, once the Almighty has been invoked, the Reverend Spring changes to show the militant side of his nature. He has defended his faith, upheld Divine Sovereignty, and led his flock in prayer. He now arms to defend actively the cause whose righteousness he has proclaimed. Brooking no opposition from the commander-in-chief, he insists that the sacredness of the cause gives approbation to his singular act. This insistence would be in accord with his chosen text of the prior Sunday as the Chaplain assumes the role of the avenging angel of the Lord. Although there is no record that the Chaplain bore arms in either camp, Brackenridge's association with him at the College of New Jersey may have given him the insight to detect this militancy in his old college friend. This perception translated into action adds a new dimension to the drama in its representation of the types of people who actively sought to deliver their land from the foe. This act of arming also places Reverend Spring on the scene to urge a deranged Burr to leave an insensible corpse to the elements and turn his efforts as a living warrior to the continued war effort. The Reverend Spring acts also as a reliable witness to the apparition that visits the death scene to give the heroes and the cause the sanction of heaven.

When The Death of General Montgomery appeared in

print, first in April 12, 1777, the war effort has met with discouraging results on all fronts. Where in The Battle of Bunkers-Hill General Warren could imbue the American cause with his assurances of Divine approbation, for this second spectacular defeat more authoritative word was required to explain the adversities the colonists were experiencing. Thus Brackenridge wisely chose to portray Reverend Spring as God's "aide-de-camp" who could explain the defeat in terms of Divine Providence while promising ultimate victory. Having altered history to place the Chaplain in Montgomery's column, Brackenridge confers highest praise on the cleric through the martyred hero. Giving the clergyman his liberal viewpoint in explaining divine intervention in terms of natural causes would convince those leaning towards deism and not offend those who still clung to the God of Special Providences. In having the divine actually arm for the battle, further approbation of the American cause is implied. Thus Spring stands not only as very convincing characterization but also as very effective propaganda.

Spring's disputant, the "gallant volunteer from the State of Connecticut" Eleazer Oswald, performs an important function in the drama. The only individual enlisted man to speak in the play, he represents the body of nameless heroes whose sacrifices were as important to them as any the officers had to make. His privileged position as secretary to Arnold

allows him the freedom with the officers that results in his second speech, the declaration that the age of miracles is past. The apostle of the Enlightenment also represents those in the colonies whose beliefs could not accept Divine Assistance as an operative force. Like another apostle, the Doubting Thomas, he demands proof of God's approbation by an unqualified colonial success in the upcoming battle. Since the Chaplain had stressed the system of rewards and punishment, Oswald insists that Heaven must reward the good with the tangible results of an American victory that very day. But he also states that "distressed innocence and injured rights," if the Chaplain is correct, must ultimately triumph; therefore, the proof that Oswald requires can still be forthcoming. The discussion ends on the note of agreement that the colonists will ultimately triumph. Oswald has not been converted, but the Chaplain has not abandoned his belief in Divine Assistance.

Oswald, through his position as secretary, travels on the battlefield with Arnold. Thus it is he who effects the commander's quick removal from the field once Arnold receives the crippling shot. It is his happy task to announce that Hendricks has taken the first objective under Morgan's direction. However, the real humanity of Oswald becomes apparent in the heartrending grief the man expresses at the killing of his Pennsylvania friend. Incorporating Hendricks' love of his native surroundings, Oswald predicts that the

Susquehannah River will be augmented by the flood of tears greeting the news of Hendricks' demise. Referring to Hendricks' earnest wish to live out his days on the banks of the river provides this eulogy with a personal touch that is lacking in the others uttered by Burr. And in the deep loss Oswald expresses, Brackenridge manages to convey a sympathetic characteristic to a character so far merely instrumental in provoking controversy.

Oswald's most important function in the drama, however, is to suggest to Morgan, now the commander of the second column, that the men surrender to avoid senseless slaughter. Calling all as witness to his performance in the heat of battle, he deems it not cowardice but common sense to surrender rather than lose more lives. Since throughout the play the volunteer had voiced no high motives such as fighting for freedom, driving the tyrants from the land, or reliance upon divine aid, this disposition to accept the offer of a supposedly Christian foe is quite in keeping with the character Brackenridge has so far presented. Morgan had asked direction from the soldiers upon assuming command; this act of one of the soldiers follows this precedent. His act also relieves Morgan of initiating such an action.

Although Brackenridge creates a consistent character, Oswald could have possibly alienated that part of society he wished to reach through the dramatization of the common man.

Baiting the Chaplain and openly doubting the Christian reward-punishment scheme were not popular traits in the time of national need. However, faced with the dilemma of having the Americans surrender. Brackenridge made the logical choice in having an enlisted man offer the first suggestion to lay down arms to a new leader whose first act was to seek the troops' direction. Thus, although Captain Morgan endorses the suggestion thereby effecting the capitulation, the sting of surrender is diminished through Oswald's action. For practical purposes the choice was the only one. Oswald's weakness is somewhat softened by his redeeming characteristic, his personal tribute in the eulogy for Hendricks.

In Captain John Lamb of the New York artillery company, Brackenridge presents a humane soldier concerned with the enemy wounded. He asks the Surgeon, actually Dr. Isaac Senter, to tend to their needs. The incident is no doubt included to sharpen the contrast of the treatment of the enemy by each side. Captain Lamb also offers token resistance to Governor Carleton before the surrender. For Brackenridge's polemic purposes, both actions of the captain are effective.

However, the captain's interchange with Major Meggs, who is actually Major Return Meigs, is quite unnecessary. Captain Lamb could have responded with calls for his artillery to one of the other officer's observation that the enemy was vastly superior in strength. Since Major Meigs was paroled

on 2 January, 1776,¹⁰³ omitting him from the drama would have concentrated on those who fully participated in the results of the surrender.

On the side of the opposition, Colonel Maclean functions to bring both battle lines into perspective. His attitude toward his enemy is what one could expect from a loyal soldier in King George's army. He first appears in the fifth act to announce the defeat of Montgomery's troops, the great leader's death and to comment on the persistence of Arnold's forces. Maclean is a utilitarian figure who also functions as auditor to Carleton's aside during his dialogue with the prisoners. Such a technique is necessary for historical accuracy. Since the threats which Carleton makes, particularly those regarding the torture of the soldiers by the Indians, did not occur, the playwright provides reasons why the governor dared not carry out his infamous scheme while still sustaining the desired monstrous quality.

Governor Guy Carleton, also a loyal soldier administrator, had served his country well in the New World. He was fifty years old when he returned to Canada in 1774 after four years of absence in England. Though his province of Quebec had been quiet and orderly during these years, the

¹⁰³Senter, p. 35.

It is also of note that Major Meigs, who speaks only eight lines, is included in the Dramatis Personae; Captain Lamb, assigned three speeches, including a moving eulogy on Montgomery, is omitted.

American colonies had suffered the Boston Massacre, the Boston Tea Party, and had formed the Continental Congress to unite in protest against the Intolerable Acts. Although the Province of Quebec had declined an invitation to participate in this body, Carleton decided to return to Canada. It had been as conqueror in 1759 that Lieutenant Colonel Carleton, quartermaster general of General James Wolfe's victorious army had entered the city. Appointed lieutenant governor of Quebec in 1766, he took command the following year of the army of General Murray, who was recalled to England. In 1775 Carleton received his appointment as governor of the province. In serving his French subjects, Carleton had generally earned their respect for his fair and sympathetic rule. To these subjects the governor had brought from London the Quebec Act which had further infuriated the American colonies. However, dissident minorities in the province had shown enough of a spirit of rebellion that Carleton recommended, as general in chief of all Canada, that the forts of Ticonderoga, Crown Point, and Lake George be repaired. He suggested, too, plans for improving the "flimsy" walls of Montreal and restoring the defenses of Quebec to their former strength. In his report to London, Carleton estimated that to defend Canada against an invading army would require ten thousand men. However, as the province seemed not in real danger, in 1774 General Gage, facing active rebellion in Massachusetts, had drawn on Carleton for troops. On

September 4, 1774, Carleton sent his two best regiments of the four that he had under command.¹⁰⁴ Ticonderoga and Montreal were later taken, and Governor Carleton waited in Quebec for promised reinforcements from England.

Carleton's own views of the Revolution matched in certain respects those of his countryman General Howe as Brackenridge had portrayed them in The Battle of Bunkers-Hill. His own quiet province had seen little disruption; the insurrection centered on the troublesome New England sea coast. He viewed the rebellion as the work of a few twisted minds whose arguments were able to persuade a good body of the citizens that armed resistance was the only way to conduct their affairs. Secure in his city, he refused to fight, negotiate or communicate in any way other than to insist that the insurgents seek the King's pardon.¹⁰⁵

Concerning Carleton's ill-treatment of the American prisoners in Quebec, there is no record that he carried out the dire threats attributed to him by Brackenridge. When Major Meigs came out of the city on parole on January 2, 1776, he reported that "they were used very well."¹⁰⁶ Morgan's

¹⁰⁴Bird, pp. 24-31.

¹⁰⁵Smith, II, 99-100, 103-04.

¹⁰⁶Senter, p. 35.

letters, which contain insights into the privations suffered by the prisoners in Quebec, make no mention of the atrocities of which Brackenridge speaks.¹⁰⁷ The dramatist's footnote acknowledges that the prisoners were at first well treated, but reports that as the fortunes of the Americans in Canada declined, the demonic side of his nature became paramount. In support he cites eyewitness accounts of survivors from the surrender at the Cedars. Such ill-treatment as alluded to in the text seems to have been carried out at that remote post, although on how large a scale the authorities do not agree.¹⁰⁸

Brackenridge confines the governor's role to the last two scenes of the play. The first portrays his confrontation with Arnold's men as he seeks to effect their surrender, and the second takes place immediately after their capture. The dramatist never insists that the threats were carried out in Quebec; he merely states that his depiction shows the governor's capabilities in light of events subsequent to the incarceration of the Americans. The villainy of Carleton is slowly unfolded in four speeches. We first see the administrator calling upon the Americans to surrender. Using the body of Montgomery as tangible evidence of his failure, Carleton informs them that they are surrounded and asks for

¹⁰⁷Graham prints these letters in his Appendix.

¹⁰⁸Smith, II, 377-80, Remarks XCV, pp. 594-96 and Boatner, p. 191.

their arms. When Lamb tries to incite further resistance, Carleton offers peace, then dire threats indicative of his intransigence. If he loses more men in subduing the rebels, the Americans shall not experience any of the decent amenities accorded Christian foes, but their bodies shall be left to rot. With some of Howe's praise, but none of his sincerity, Carleton honors the fighting spirit of the men and offers treatment in accord with the rules of war.

The actions of the governor in this pentultimate scene are quite in accord with what was known of the man's reasonable character as dedicated emissary of the King. However, in the final scene, Carleton reveals an innate hatred of all traitors to the crown he has sworn to uphold. His catalogue of invectives fits the man who considered the rebellion the product of a demented mind. His threats of hanging are the conditioned response of a soldier-governor empowered to deal with treason, one of the most heinous civil wrongs. It is doubtful, however, that his relish in the sufferings of the prisoners and the victims of the Indians for human sacrifice is an accurate portrayal of the man who had gone to such personal intervention on behalf of his former French enemies to secure the passage of the Quebec Acts. Granted his using a trick to obtain the prisoners' surrender and his heartfelt hatred of traitors, it somewhat strains the imagination to picture this able administrator as the fiend so represented. One can justify Brackenridge's having him turn

over the prisoners to the Indians since the story had gained credence in the colonies. But his almost sensual delight in their anticipated torment is overdrawn and barely justifiable on patriotic grounds, inexcusable as dramatic invention.

The governor was indeed awaiting reinforcements as Arnold's men still besieged the city. Therefore, his aside to Maclean, tinged with regret that he could not administer the punishment the traitors deserved for fear of reprisals, is an accurate depiction of the loyal Englishman's frame of mind. But Carleton's comparison of the King of England to the patient Heavenly Father also stretches the imagination considering the reputation of George III on both sides of the Atlantic. However, Carleton could have used the clemency of the King for returned, wayward sons in less exalted similes. His final threat of reprisals if the insurgence continues is quite in accord with the temperament of an able, loyal soldier-administrator who had served his government for so long a time.

Brackenridge's portrait, evolving as it does into a complete villain, while having some basis of truth in representation, is melodramatic and overdrawn in the final scene. Had he chosen to reduce the graphic pictures of the torments the Americans would endure and merely presented another oath-breaker who hated all thought of rebellion, the character

would have been far more credible. Brackenridge built his image on rumors of atrocities, intended and real. Integrating them into the play was an excellent idea; however in execution the inflated villainy of the governor destroys the effect such incorporation would have insured.

In the appearance of General James Wolfe, Brackenridge portrays a soldier both sickened at the waste of wars, especially in the young, and ashamed of his part in making England supreme on the continent and in his castigation of the King and Parliament, the apparition defines his own essence, an essence that is not a projection of his admirers throughout the play. Thus the ghost is not an echo of the past nor a recounter of his brave deeds, but a character in his own right who with the wisdom and insight acquired in his new domain is free to speak with authorities on the future of the American cause. First he is able to assure the audience that all adversities are the will of God, purchase for greater benefits. Thus though the battle may be lost, the war will be won. The men have not died in vain, for their deaths shall insure the separation of the child colonies from the mad mother that had fostered them, and they will take their place as a strong nation in their own right. The shade's view of the federal republic offers to those who would tear down the existing structure a newer and better "empire," the "United States." The nation of which Wolfe speaks actually came into

being in the broad context he outlines. Thus Burr and the colonies can take comfort from this heavenly agent in the ultimate triumph of their aims and the departure of the despised Englishmen from the shores of the New World.

Having the ghost speak is one of Brackenridge's most clever inventions. Wolfe links both the old and new, and having seen the course of the mother country, can predict its ultimate defeat. His words of comfort to Burr act as explanation to those who might feel that American casualties indicate a lost cause. His view of a new structure to replace the old removes the anarchic tinge of revolution and replaces it with architectural overtones in the building of a new nation.

The Death of General Montgomery illustrates Brackenridge's dramatic sophistication by developing characters rather than presenting them. Montgomery's character is revealed not only in his declarations, but also in his actions, reactions, and the relationships expressed by the other characters. Depending on only one soliloquy to reveal the thoughts of the hero, Brackenridge unfolds the general's concern for the young Macpherson, his adept handling of his men through the Chaplain, Arnold and the youths, and his personal courage in asking his men to shoot him rather than let him witness their cowardice. Montgomery changes from the assured commander on the eve of the attack when all elements seem favorable, into a decisive leader when faced with the challenge of his plan's being revealed. Burr and Cheesman's

efforts to keep him from exposing himself reveal the reciprocal respect that the leader has engendered. Arnold too changes from a willing subordinate to a leader fully capable of inspiring his own men. Once the first shot is fired, the real Arnold emerges as a leader who marshalls his men, deploys the various tactical units and answers almost shot for shot the enemy fire. His final action of insisting on remaining on the field while wounded speaks far more eloquently of his character than his own admissions or tributes from his men.

The heroic attitudes of Macpherson and Cheesman were fully exploited for their dramatic potential and contribution to the theme. But in portraying these youths, the dramatist was careful to accent those qualities that truly defined their essential character. Macpherson's preoccupation with the immortal fame to be gained derives from his admiration for the storied Wolfe. Cheesman's act of dressing "gaily" contrasts to Macpherson's preoccupation with death and illustrates another attitude toward death. His purse of burial money further singularizes the naive idealist.

While Burr was an excellent choice to reinforce the attitude of the young toward Montgomery, his character deteriorates after an initially fine presentation. From a fiery, practical warrior impatient to emulate his hero in the coming battle, Burr disintegrates into a pathetic, deranged being that cannot be reconciled either to what was

known of him or to the character so far presented.

Hendricks, on the other hand, shows a consistency of character through its stages of development. True to his training he accepts the will of Providence in the outcome of the battle while expressing a personal wish to live to enjoy the fruits of that battle. However, when Arnold assigns him a less dangerous place in the column, he sets aside submission to proper authority and eloquently pleads for a place in the front of the attack. Under actual battle conditions, his meekness disappears as he fiercely battles, taking the barrier and, using the most effective means to inspire his men, urges them on to scale the walls. His death fulfills a destiny his training has conditioned him to accept and also purchases for him that glory he so eagerly sought.

Morgan's characterization is consistent with the dramatist's conception however altered from fact. Although asking for the soldiers' direction, his cunning mind manipulates their decision. Even his agreement to surrender can be justified as another example of bowing to the will of the men whose endorsement he had sought. But the latent fiery nature has full reign as Morgan in the face of an adamant conqueror castigates Carleton with invectives drawn from the whole of creation.

The Chaplain in his short appearances changes from a peaceful man of God to warrior in the cause of that God. He also manifests some of the worldly wisdom that kept him

intact on the long march through the Maine wilderness. It is he who urges the emotion-filled Burr to leave the scene of the slaughter and save his valor for another time. Oswald also undergoes a change from the taunting skeptic first painted as Hendricks' death evokes from him deep feelings that mark a sensitive human being.

Carleton's characterization as the villain is an impressive failure, dipping as it does into the depraved tactics of the Gothic fiend in the final scene. Even here, however, Brackenridge has the character develop, hiding his innate treachery until the final confrontation when the pure villain, unredeemed by any human traits, recounts with sensual glee the terrors awaiting the captives.

In the lesser characters there is a conscious effort to present the real person known to the colonies. Thus Lamb deploys his artillery and refuses to give up; the Surgeon displays clinical knowledge of the wounds inflicted; Major Meigs refuses to consider the possibility of failure; and Colonel Maclean reflects the attitude of a loyal British subject towards those who would destroy the existing order.

In the ghost of Wolfe, Brackenridge links the old and new, destroys old loyalties and predicts the great future for the colonies that would be inappropriate coming from the soldiers. The ghost is neither an echo nor a projection of the mind of any of the characters. He dwells not on the past and his own reputation, but on the present that will enable

the colonies to secure a stable future free from the wrongs that now oppress them. With the appearance of General Wolfe, Brackenridge achieves one of his finest presentations.

A careless or superficial reading of the play could lead, as it has one of Brackenridge's critics, to the judgment that "all characters speak almost identically."¹⁰⁹ Yet a study of the diction will reveal that Brackenridge took care to cast each person's speeches in a diction appropriate to the character depicted. At times, repetition is encountered in the vocatives, "brave" soldiers, Montgomery, etc. "gallant" officers, soul, etc., "young" Burr and others. However, these few instances are more than compensated for in other terms of address more appropriate to the speaker involved.

Because of the dramatist's skill in characterization, the diction of each indicates the background and personalities that the drama unfolds. In general, each person contributes to the unfolding of the action and the development of the theme in his own particular manner. Montgomery and Burr are the only ones to cite civil wrongs as motivation for fighting, each alluding to them once. Arnold, on the other hand, urges his troops forward with more practical considerations of British cowardice and the comfort awaiting the veterans in the shelter of Quebec. Hendricks urges local pride and the

¹⁰⁹Marder, p. 69. To prove his point, Marder gives as examples two speeches which he attributes to Montgomery and Macpherson. Both speeches are in fact cast in the same terms because Montgomery is the speaker in both instances.

tangible reward of gold or currency to his veterans. It is therefore left to the Chaplain in disputing with the deist Oswald to insist that ultimate victory will be gained because they fight in a just cause. Montgomery refers to "the sacred cause of liberty" and a "just cause," but never intones to Arnold or the men that "God is on our side."

Only those fated to die refer to the fame to be won by sacrificing their lives in their country's cause. Yet each responds to the thought with words and actions peculiar to his temperament. Montgomery calls upon God to protect his family and friends, comforts Macpherson with a Christian Valhalla and the redeeming of the soul through sacrifice. Macpherson dwells on Wolfe, whom he feels he will soon join, while Cheesman expresses concern with the disposition of his corpse. Hendricks, while facing the possibility of death and resigning himself to it, expresses in almost idyllic ecstasy the joys he prefers as a living member of the colonies.

All have a common hatred of the enemy which calls forth a variety of names from Montgomery, Arnold, Burr, Morgan, and Lamb. Even Wolfe appears to add a few new ones of his own. Only the Chaplain and Hendricks, however, use the Bible in denouncing the British. The only other Biblical allusion comes from Oswald more to display his knowledge than to call upon the Almighty. In calling upon God for assistance, Montgomery invokes the Almighty ten times; Arnold cries to God in anguish once. The Chaplain, as to be expected, refers

to Him quite often. The others do not seek His intercession.

The British pepper their speeches with denunciations of the rebels. Maclean sees Montgomery as another Satan while Carleton draws upon all that is base in creation to villify his foes. The governor does translate the colonial concept of liberty to terms of demented thinking. All mention of God is absent from their utterances, the highest order of creation in their minds being their King who is spoken of in Scriptural terms of the patient father awaiting the return of the prodigal.

In developing the characters of the two leaders, Brackenridge fully utilizes their differences in background to differentiate their speaking habits. Most striking are the terms that Montgomery, as a transplanted Englishman, uses to express himself. Every reference to the hostile Indians is characterized by the conglomerate "Savages."¹¹⁰ His only other name for these creatures is descriptive of their fallen nature, "Hell-Hounds."¹¹¹ Having been for so long a loyal son of Britain, Montgomery speaks of present events in terms of his past experiences. Thus he is the only one, other than Macpherson's father or the ghost of Wolfe, to dwell on a war fought with honor, the French and Indian War, the thoughts of which make him recoil at the fratricide aspect of this one.

¹¹⁰ D.G.M., pp. 10, 16, 27, 30, 35.

¹¹¹ Ibid., p. 10.

Far more horrible to him, however, is the image of the mother country:

Be witness here, in this unnatural strife,
Where a mad mother doth her children stab.
You, when you fought, did not unsheath your sword
Against your countrymen, and younger sons.¹¹²

The dominant influence of that earlier war conjoined with the associations of the battle ground he now walks conjures up for him the constant memory of the hero of that war, General Wolfe. So pervasive is that presence, that Montgomery refers to him, reflects on him or directly addresses him seven times.¹¹³ Arnold, who had only fought for a time in the war, mentions him once. The only others to draw inspiration from that figure are Macpherson and Cheesman, who each express an admiration once.¹¹⁴ Stung by the thought that he had also helped establish the supremacy of the nation that now oppresses them, Montgomery, except for Morgan's final speech, is more stinging in the epithets applied to the foe. From the mild "cruel foe," his invectives increase in scorn and revulsion to "butchers," "parasites," and the ultimate "Hell-born-progeny."¹¹⁵ Montgomery sees the author of the conflict as a government of the corrupt, his knowledge gained during

¹¹²Ibid., pp. 26-27.

¹¹³Ibid., pp. 14, 15, 26, 27, 29.

¹¹⁴Ibid., pp. 18, 19.

¹¹⁵Ibid., pp. 10, 27, 29.

his stay in London:

I saw it early, and withdrew myself,
To sweet retirement, on the Hudson's banks,
And am persuaded, that had mighty Wolfe,
Surviv'd his victory, his native isle,
O'er-run with parasites, that drink the looks
Of flatter'd Majesty, and base-born Lords,
Would have disgusted him.¹¹⁶

Having had such a close association with the government, Montgomery is able to see its despotic acts in a much broader context, and to make his declarations of tyranny from this world view:

No mighty shade;
Britannia then was free herself; her King,
Call'd not for butchers, to secure his sway
Tyrannical, and to be held with blood,
Unhappy reign of an inhuman George!¹¹⁷

This consciousness of wrongs finds its most emphatic and stirring expression in his speech to the soldiers, in a psalmlike invocation of causes:

Come on my soldiers, let me pray your haste,
By all that lives in man, of noble fortitude.
By this your country, and those natal ties,
Which binds the memory to the place of birth;
By your spoil'd liberty, and injur'd rights;
By the religions, which you owe to God;
By your own safety, and the love of life,
Come on my gallant countrymen, come on;¹¹⁸

This same broader view inspires the soldier as he, in his discourses on the battle, announces his will to fight against an "unright cause," and wage instead a battle for a just

¹¹⁶Ibid., p. 27.

¹¹⁷Ibid., pp. 27, 29, 35.

¹¹⁸Ibid., p. 35.

cause and "the sacred cause of liberty."¹¹⁹ None of the others exhibit this preoccupation with abstract concepts of justice.

His forms of address label the man as a newcomer, almost self-conscious in his role as leader of combined American columns. Although the terms "gallant" and "brave" are standard neoclassical appellations, given Montgomery's peculiar position and his awareness of his recent status as colonial, they become singularly appropriate. His address to Arnold as "gallant officer"¹²⁰ marks not only his deference to his subordinate but his appreciation of the hardships the famine proof veteran had endured. Speaking to the younger members of his staff, Montgomery strikes the right note of relationship in acknowledging their untried status: "young hero," "young soldier," and "young Burr."¹²¹ Most striking are his terms to his fellow patriots which indicate not the stern commander who had to adjust his rigid standards to accommodate the militia trained status of his men but manifests instead that appreciation of single intent a disparate group can subscribe to. Before launching into the assault, Montgomery speaks to them as "friends and countrymen," "friends," and "fellow soldiers."¹²² The attack itself

¹¹⁹Ibid., pp. 10, 12, 15, 27.

¹²⁰Ibid., p. 13.

¹²¹Ibid., pp. 15, 16, 34.

¹²²Ibid., p. 29.

replaces this affection as he urges his men to show their worth as "brave soldiery" and "brave countrymen."¹²³ At the first sign of their tardiness, Montgomery tries to revive their spirits by having them earn the names "brave officer" and "brave souls."¹²⁴ After a mild rebuke in which he calls them "Gentlemen," more reminiscent of the Old World than the New, the general makes one more appeal to their common interest by returning to the appreciative, "gallant countrymen."¹²⁵ The most telling of his incomplete assimilation in the colonial culture is found in his musings on Britain's injustices. He does not speak of the King's chaining us or binding us down. Instead, his British birth and experiences have him speak of chaining "the American" and binding "him."¹²⁶

As the hero of the play, his speech is characterized by more of the sentiments associated with such paragons. It is left to him to introduce the theme of the proposed Indian atrocities and to refer to this horror four times. Although he never specifically states that "God is on our side," his reverence toward the Creator conditions a majority of his

¹²³Ibid., p. 32.

¹²⁴Ibid., p. 33.

¹²⁵Ibid., pp. 34, 35.

¹²⁶Ibid., p. 27.

speeches, alternately praying, asking for guidance, and in one magnificent act of self-denial, offering himself for his country's cause while he commits his family to the care of the Almighty.

To thee O God,
I leave my spouse, sweet children, and each friend,
That mourns behind. Shew them thy grace,
And tender mercy, in the walks of life,
And from its changes, rescue them at last,
To the fruition of thy self, in joy.¹²⁷

These intimacies with the Creator occur in seven of his speeches. Except for the Chaplain, Arnold and Cheesman are the only other living members of the cast to invoke or reflect on the deity, each one time. This reverence for God finds its finest expression in the general's high praise of clergymen on the brink of the battle. The active participation that the general allows him reminds Montgomery that he himself could have been more of a doer in the Christian sense. Regretting his lack of time to discuss his role as a Christian and implying penitence for all transgressions, Montgomery follows the lead of the clergy by moving out the troops as schedules.¹²⁸ Although Macpherson and Hendricks express deep family feelings, Montgomery's speech about leaving his wife and unborn child is much more intense than the youths', whose sentiments, while valid, are not too

¹²⁷Ibid., p. 16.

¹²⁸Ibid., p. 32.

remarkable considering they had only known one family hearth.

Usually most circumspect and discreet, the soldier in Montgomery breaks through to apprise his young aide of his presentiments of death:

I believe not superstition, or the dreams,
Of high wrought fantasy, that fill the brain,
But yet methinks, Macpherson, that I feel,
Within this hour, some knowledge of my end;
Some sure presentiment, that you and I,
This day, shall be with them, shall leave,¹²⁹
Our breathless bodies on this mortal soil.

He softens this blunt forecast with a calm acceptance of God's will compounded with the sure knowledge that heroes gain God's mercy and everlasting fame. The heaven he pictures for the idealistic Macpherson is a Christian Valhalla peopled with the warriors whose conduct in battle provides guidelines for his own.

More than any other individuating aspects of his diction is his affinity for Nature which he initially sees as actively conspiring to aid the American cause.¹³⁰ The very rivers that witness the British entrenchment are kindly disposed to the colonial cause:

I see on this side,
Along the precipice, and that sad stream,
Which washes their redoubts; with equal force,
You at the conflux, of the kindred tides,
St. Charles, and St. Lawrence, force your way.¹³¹

Almost as sharp as his pangs at leaving his wife is his disappointment at leaving his new home on the Hudson. In his

¹²⁹Ibid., p. 15.

¹³⁰Ibid., pp. 9-10.

¹³¹Ibid., pp. 13-14.

musings on the inclinations of a living Wolfe, he offers a paeon to the natural splendors of the New World that is second only in value to the Valhalla he feels he will soon visit:

This western land,
With shades, and solitudes, and wood-crown'd hills
Had better pleas'd. He could have lov'd her glades,
O'er hung with poplars, and the bending beech,
Fan'd by the Zephyr's gale. He could have lov'd,
The budding orchard, and the oak-tree grove,
And thought, no more, of luxuries enjoy'd
With prostitution of the free-born mind.¹³²

When speaking of the vile pact between the Indians and the British, Montgomery castigates the perpetrators, as does Morgan at the end of the drama, in terms of ecological revulsion at the unnatural act that rescue the sentiments from any cloying pathetic fallacy:

To leave the dry land and embark the wave-
To leave the dry land, which beneath them groans,
And feels the pressure of malignant sin.
Yes, these sad plains, beneath their pressure, groan;
St. Lawrence stream, weeps as it passes by;
Quebec's high buildings, echo in complaint,
And Nature sickens with the infernal crew.¹³³

Nature provides the meaningful metaphor to illustrate the condition of his tardy troops:

What means this phlegm, this cold and mildew damp,
Which turns the current of the life-warm blood
To winter's ice, and freezes up the tide,
Of noble, bold, and manly resolution?¹³⁴

¹³²Ibid., p. 27.

¹³³Ibid., pp. 29-30.

¹³⁴Ibid., p. 34.

Closely allied with this keen perception of Nature is the romantic view he holds of the Plains of Abraham, seeing it as an "enchanted ground" upon which the "knights" Wolfe and Montcalm had combated.¹³⁵

Although Montgomery makes one classical allusion in his first speech,¹³⁶ the Bible provides no comparisons for him. The only oxymorons in the play, probably reflecting the strong influence of Milton in both hemispheres, are employed by Montgomery, once in conjunction with his beloved Nature which will shield the troops' movements by giving the "tumult privacy" and again in his castigation of the British who with the French had "subdu'd them into happiness."¹³⁷

Arnold's speeches mark him, ironically in view of his later career, as the counterpart to Montgomery, as a hero of domestic vintage rather than the import that Montgomery was. Where Montgomery speaks of an almost elemental part of the environment, the Savages, Arnold speaks of the natives not fallen in nature but as creatures little better than animals. He amplifies the general's knowledge with his catalogue of tribes from the "wolf-resounding mountain top:" "Onondago, Outawae, Huron, Mohawk, Oneida, Shawnese," and "an hundred names of uncouth accent."¹³⁸

¹³⁵Ibid., p. 14.

¹³⁶Ibid., p. 12, His reference to Pharsalia's plain may have been common currency of comparison. Senter, p. 33, also uses this allusion.

¹³⁷D.G.M., pp. 9, 29.

¹³⁸Ibid., p. 11.

Where Montgomery had considered them merely instruments of Hell, Arnold imputes active devil worship to them as he informs Montgomery:

The Indian warrior, tasted it, and sware,
By that fell Demon, whom he hates and prays,
That thus the blood of each Bostonian shed,
Should slake his appetite.¹³⁹

Although Arnold had fought for a time in the earlier war, Wolfe for him has no particular inspiration, merely an association with the place where he now fights. Only when the commander waits to begin the assault does the thought of that prior battle and its hero occur to him. Far more vivid are the recent hardships his column has endured in the rough progress through the wilderness to Quebec. When Montgomery in admiration sketches in broad outline the Virginia and Massachusetts-Bay men who has passed "o'er many a region, dolorous and drear," Arnold fills in the details with the completed roster of the units participating and vivid reminders of the barriers they had to surmount:

Nor less eulogium, have those merited,
Who, from New-England's happy streams, more north,
With me experienced, and saw the fate
Of war's fore tragedy, on Bunker's-Hill.
And since, in common, with th' embodied force,
Have borne sharp famine, and severest toil,
While up the rapid Kennebec, they stem'd,
Th' impetuous torrent, or at carrying place,
O'er broad morass, deep swamp, and craggy wild
Urg'd their rough way. Thence over hill,
And dreary mountain top, to where Chaudiere
Doth mix his wave, and with the Saint Lawrence tide.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁹Ibid. Arnold is the only person in the play to use the term "Indian." He seems to prefer the descriptive term "Savage."

¹⁴⁰Ibid., pp. 12-13.

Montgomery's wide experiences on both sides of the Atlantic had given him a more comprehensive view of the tyranny that was enthralling the colonies. Arnold's perception of the tyranny is more limited, perhaps because he had been able to evade it in his old contraband running days when he sailed and commanded his trading ships. "Tyrannic sway" falls from his lips once. Otherwise, conscious of the deaths of his countrymen, "butchers, "oppressors," and "cut-throat homicides" express his opinion of the men who killed his countrymen.¹⁴¹ Montgomery, the only figure in the play to dwell on the abstract concepts of injured rights, uses this motivation to spur on his soldiers. Arnold, on the other hand, knows his men and what will motivate them. Redress of wrongs will not raise half-rations or fill the pockets with back pay. The more practical considerations mark Arnold's speeches to his men as he depicts the "cold, watching, famine, and a thousand toils," and the smug cowardice of the British who remain in the walled town. But the most compelling reason that Arnold gives his men for advancing is to promise them those creature comforts that they will enjoy if they can but be victorious.¹⁴²

Arnold's addresses are a mixture of deference, camaraderie, and standardized diction. In speaking to his superior he uses the term, "brave Montgomery," a compound of

¹⁴¹Ibid., pp. 11, 14, 28.

¹⁴²Ibid., p. 28.

the expected address to a superior officer and a token acknowledgement of Montgomery's past record. His first converse with Hendricks is pure, stylized, neoclassic address, "brave Hendricks." However, when the young captain pleads for a position in the front ranks, Arnold shows his awesome respect for the youth with the egalitarian response, "Sir."¹⁴³ Arnold's keen appreciation of his men shows in his first address to them when he, recalling their hardships, speaks to them as "Heroes, and patriots." To show that fighting for the comforts of Quebec does not in any way lessen their status as proven warriors, he begins his urgings with "brave souls," winding up his peroration with "my countrymen."¹⁴⁴ This same psychology appears in his address when he hears the first enemy shot. He calls upon his "veteran soldiery" to respond in kind. Camaraderie marks his last address to them as wounded he cries to his "brave companions" to continue advancing.¹⁴⁵

Although Brackenridge had the Chaplain bear the burden of casting the battle in terms of a holy way, Arnold is the only one of the laymen to indicate that "God is on our side." With the many disappointments and defeats of this venture, it is no wonder that the Divine Assistance theme

¹⁴³Ibid., pp. 11; 24-25.

¹⁴⁴Ibid., p. 28.

¹⁴⁵Ibid., pp. 24, 25.

was subordinated to a lesser, long range view from the mouth of a minister. However, to indicate that Montgomery showed good judgment in ordering an attack under such adverse conditions, Brackenridge has Arnold, part of the war council, endorse the plan by implying that the Creator had given approbation:

All things, are favouring to our enterprize;
The scaling-ladders, for the assault, prepar'd,
And Heaven, the signal, which we waited for,
In this snow-driven storm, presents to us.¹⁴⁶

Arnold does not have the same intimate relationship with the Creator that the hero Montgomery enjoys. His only mention of the deity occurs as a prayerful response to the tale of intended Indian atrocities, then not in direct address, but the more formal and perhaps less familiar subjunctive "which God avert."¹⁴⁷

Arnold's accent is on life. Even in his speech to Montgomery, in which he acknowledges that the attack is extremely dangerous, Arnold declares his bravery and lack of fear. The epitaph he indicates will be sufficient honor for his grave excludes any mention of dying in this particular battle:

"Here Arnold lies, who with Montgomery fought,
"Stemming the torrent of tyrannic sway."¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶Ibid., p. 12.

¹⁴⁷Ibid., p. 11.

¹⁴⁸Ibid., p. 14.

When he changes Hendricks from the rear guard to the front, Arnold explicitly speaks of fame for warriors in terms of valiant fighting rather than glorious death:

I count it happy that I go with men,
Who thirst for danger, and renown in arms,
Your station shall be chang'd, and in the van,
You shall have scope to shew your fortitude,
And purchase glory that shall never die.¹⁴⁹

Born in America and having more a mercantile than a romantic spirit, Arnold shows no appreciation for the beauties of nature. At times his adjectives verge on resentment. As a warrior, Arnold expects Nature to serve him and his task, not deter him in any way. The very terrain where the Indians make their homes takes on an ominous aspect as Arnold recounts the "wolf-resounding mountain top." Nature does not aid the Americans; rather an authoritative Heaven must force it to send the "snow-driven storm" that masks the Americans' preparations.¹⁵⁰ His most stinging denunciation of Nature occurs as he recalls the "rapid Kennebec," the "broad morass, deep swamp, and craggy wild," and "dreary mountain top" that tried to impede his progress. And although Heaven sent, the elements still are able to harrass the Americans on the Plains of Abraham with "ice-bound soil," "hard frost," "arrowy sleet," and "face-corroding storm."¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁹Ibid., p. 25.

¹⁵⁰Ibid., pp. 11, 12.

¹⁵¹Ibid., p. 13

Hostile Nature stirs him to greatest indignation when he addresses his troops who have suffered so at her hands. Again the terrain seems purposely to be comprised of "dreary mountain, river, bog, and lake." He urges his men to flee from the "rain, deep snow, and binding ice" to triumph over this enemy in the snug walls of Quebec.¹⁵² Although he never expressed any enthusiasm for any part of his surroundings, Arnold manages to be neutral about the two Canadian rivers, calling them "these sister tides." He does see a potential use for Nature when the Americans are victorious. Then the terrain can be instruments to broadcast the glad tidings:

O, if this day, we stumble not, Quebec
 With all her stores and magazines is ours;
 And thro' America the sound shall ring,
 Of unstain'd victory; thro' all her groves,
 The bold atchievment shall be mentioned,¹⁵³
 And every hill shall echo with our fame.

No imagery appears in the speech of this homespun hero, no Biblical and but one classical allusion that seems out of place in the practical, plain speech offered so far. When wounded, Arnold announces the direct hit, "like Achilles, wounded in the heel."¹⁵⁴ Dr. Senter, in his Journal describes the wound in lower case, reducing the comparison to clinical terms.¹⁵⁵ With his penchant for footnotes, the dramatist

¹⁵²Ibid., p. 28.

¹⁵³Ibid., p. 41.

¹⁵⁴Ibid.

¹⁵⁵Senter, p. 34.

would have been more consistent had he used this method of documenting the wound and drawing his parallel extra-texturally.

Eagerness to fight and anger characterize the speech of the practical Burr, thus differentiating him from his comrades Cheesman and Macpherson. Fired with the imaginative scheme of attacking in such adverse conditions, he enthusiastically enacts the battle for Macpherson, depicting the words and actions of his revered leader Montgomery:

First in the van, let me bespeak a place,
Close by the General, for he loves to lead,
His gallant troops, and not to send them on,
With, go my lads, and scale that lofty wall.
But come, brave soldiers, of fair worth approv'd,
And follow me, this bright illustrious day,
Through yielding foes, to triumph and to fame.¹⁵⁶

His practical nature causes him to remark on the causes of the Revolution which he casts in terms of master-slave relationship. Where Montgomery had invoked the larger aspects of the grievances, Burr cites particulars:

Who still insatiate, with full revenue,
Drawn from our commerce to their shores confin'd,
Must needs enslave us, and mark all their own.
Whether we land possess, or property
Of freer nature; still at their command,
We must resign it, and content ourselves,
With some peculium, slave-like article,
Which these our master, may vouchsafe to give.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁶ D.G.M., p. 19.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., pp. 19-20.

His anger culminates in the fierce Biblical parallel to which, as a graduate of Dr. Witherspoon's College of New Jersey, he is no stranger. Unlike his leader, however, he still does not see the struggle as planned infanticide, giving the Englishmen time to develop this horrible trait. Anger, however, is absent from the young aide's urgings to the tardy troops of Montgomery.¹⁵⁸ Given his known temperament and fiery zeal exhibited in his first speech, the mildness of the reproach is inconsistent with the character the dramatist has so far presented.

Burr's final speeches display an amazing lack of control on the part of the dramatist, who in this play handles a much larger cast with adept differentiation of persons both in actions and speech. The Burr who heretofore had manifested a rational approach gives way to a creature whose utterances are hardly sane. The dramatist destroys his character with the pathetic fallacy that opens Burr's lamentation. The hero-worship that the aide has expressed finds suitable expression in his cries of "father, father," and one can follow his reasoning in wishing to enrage the colonies to continued resistance by the bizarre act of displaying his clothes stained with Montgomery's blood. However, his protestations about the unburied corpses of Montgomery, Cheesman, and Macpherson are not in accord with the practical warrior who

¹⁵⁸Ibid., p. 34.

would have enjoined the Chaplain to help him remove the bodies. The eulogies are so alike as to be redundant. One would almost think he mourned identical twins. To close his mourning, Burr lapses into another pathetic fallacy compounded with absurdity. Stars are nocturnal; some other way should have been found to indicate the deaths occurred during daylight.¹⁵⁹

The rational Burr surfaces for one moment as he describes in graphic detail the apparition approaching. His invitation to the shade is remarkably free from hysteria. However, more puzzling than repetitious is the second eulogy for Macpherson and the omission of panegyric for the leader he so professed to admire. There is no hint that Burr had known Macpherson before the battle. Had this been the case, their association would have been one of the first elements of the earlier tribute, as in the case of Cheesman. As it is, even by eighteenth-century standards, the lavish compliments are far too feminine to come from the youth no matter how deranged.¹⁶⁰

On the other hand, the problem of having Macpherson speak for his father as well as in his own person is handled with skill and precision. When speaking in his own person,

¹⁵⁹Ibid., pp. 36-38.

¹⁶⁰Ibid., p. 38.

Macpherson does exhibit the brooding aspect of his nature. His first speech, in reply to Montgomery's presentiment of death for both of them, announces that he had considered death to be his lot from the beginning:

The light is sweet, and death is terrible;
But when I left, my father, and my friends,
I thought of this, and counted it but gain,
If fighting bravely, in my country's cause,
I tasted death, and met an equal fame,
With those at Lexington, and Bunker's-hill.¹⁶¹

Although the young colonial is preoccupied with dying, his response to the ultimate sacrifice is colored with his admiration for the hero of that earlier war, General Wolfe, whose example had led the young warrior to meditate on the "consecrated ground" on the evening before the attack. Twice in his speech he mentions his admiration for the figure whose example he hopes to emulate.¹⁶² As eager as he is for that taste of glory, he tries to soften the somber feelings of his friend Cheesman, telling the young New Yorker that his forebodings may be only illusion. But in admitting that death is possible, Macpherson returns to the theme of glory of dying for one's country with one of the most sensitive and apt similes of the drama that is quite in accord with the character:

¹⁶¹Ibid., p. 15.

¹⁶²Ibid., p. 18.

But be it so, that death should be our lot,
 On this sad day, it is the price we give,
 For that rich ever-green, of peerless praise,
 Which they receive, who for their country die.¹⁶³

Far different from the sensitive youth is the revengeful father who speaks through him. The younger Scot idealizes the French and Indian War's heroes; the elder tastes the bitter residue of ingratitude that his maimed limb gives testimony to. Through this veteran, very real English cruelties and injustices are presented that are far more immediate and concrete than abstract concepts of injured rights or civil deaths. In his terrible oath-binding, the lad's parent adds another dimension to the privations that the colonies have suffered. Where Arnold had implied that Heaven was on the side of the colonies, the old veteran is most explicit in joining the two causes:

Fight valiantly - in every charge be first:
 Nor with the name of cowardice, disgrace
 Your father's reputation. Go my son,
 And Heav'n protect you in its cause and mine.¹⁶⁴

Through the trancelike stage Brackenridge employs an effective technique to keep the speech of young Macpherson idealistic and reverent, while the father's speech, motivated by revenge, can stand on its own merit as the true sentiments of an injured veteran from another time.

Although the young New York captain, Cheesman, feels the same forebodings as Macpherson, his speech sets him apart

¹⁶³Ibid.

¹⁶⁴Ibid., p. 21.

from the preoccupied Scot. His utterances are a proper mixture of audacity and gait, slightly tinged with a wistful hope that in death as in life he will present an appropriate appearance and merit from the hands of the foe a decent burial. He attributes his special care for his appearance to a habit of pride in always appearing at his best:

Say is it pride of the departing soul,
That one would chuse, to have the body fair,
And vested in comely, decent garb,
E'en, when it lies, yet tombless, on the field?¹⁶⁵

For all his bravado, he reveals an underlying fear that all will not go well, detailing the manner in which his corpse could be treated if the enemy are not moved by his gesture:

Haply, for sake of this, they may forbear,
To treat my pale corpse with indignant rage,
To dogs, and fowls of Heaven, casting it,
Or to mountain wolves, a prey.¹⁶⁶

Yet so committed to his end is he that he insists on fulfilling his destiny:

Let me advance, with this small chosen band,
And bear the first fire of the cannonade.¹⁶⁷

The young Pennsylvania captain, William Hendricks, exhibits in his speech his strict, Presbyterian upbringing. He too is ready with a Biblical parallel when Oswald mentions the auspicious occasion. Silent through the disputation of the Chaplain and Oswald in the matter of Divine intervention, he announces that whatever the will of God, he is resigned to accept it.¹⁶⁸ That the men of Pennsylvania should acquit themselves with honor is of prime concern. Not only does he ask

¹⁶⁵Ibid., p. 17.

¹⁶⁷Ibid., pp. 35-36.

¹⁶⁶Ibid., pp. 17-18.

¹⁶⁸Ibid., pp. 21, 24.

for a change of station so that he may give eye-witness accounts of the glories he is sure will fall to the Americans, but he also lays the honor of his colony on the line when in scaling the wall he urges:

Ye Pennsylvanian's, make the honour yours,
And shew the world, that Sasquehanna's banks
Bred one adorn'd with this bright heraldry,
This standing monument of peerless praise,
That of this army, he the first assail'd
The ramparts of Quebec, swift-planting there,
The wide-stream'd standard, representative
With Thirteen streaks of ivory and blue,
The extended provinces.¹⁶⁹

Only he of Arnold's men dies in the drama; he is the only one of both columns to exhibit such marked pride in his colony. But his love for his home and family is the young hero's most remarkable trait. In this aspect, Hendricks bears an affinity to Montgomery who speaks in the same vein. Hendricks wishes to return to the colony whose cause he so proudly advances. With a nostalgia unparalleled in the play he speaks of his boyhood delights on the stream he loves so well:

Yet I could wish,
Once more to see the Sasquehanna banks,
My native rocks, and sweet resounding hills,
Where I have fondly stray'd, delightful stream,
Where I have sported, in the summers day,
And bath'd my limbs, and angling from a rock,
Caught with my father, the too cred'lous fish,
That silvered the tide.¹⁷⁰

Not only does the youth desire to return to former joys, but a keen sense of responsibility urges him to endure in battle

¹⁶⁹Ibid., pp. 43-44.

¹⁷⁰Ibid., p. 24.

so that he may take care of his aged parent in his declining years:

My father lives
With aged hoary locks, the frost of years.
'Tis mine to aid his swift-declining strength,
And hold his trembling steps.¹⁷⁰

This gentle reminiscence provides a startling contrast with the Macpherson forbear who speaks through his son. Concerned with the older generation Hendricks also plans to continue the line on the same placid river. It is a compound of family pride and personal honor that impels him to ask for a change in station:

I would go forth, and mingle in the attack,
That when old age comes on me, and slow years,
I may have things, to tell, atchiev'd in war,
Of which, I bore a part. Then shall the youth,
Encircling me, request the hoary tale,
Of this fam'd siege; who first assail'd the wall-
What warriors fell-who wounded in the attack
How long 'twas fought-and how we gain'd the town.¹⁷¹

In this one brief role, Brackenridge depicts a truly noble patriot deserving of our sympathy and admiration. Hendricks' speech is in accord with the characterization, and he manages to boost his home state without bragging, conveys a sense of regional pride that strengthens national honor, and elevates the love of family to a plane as dignified and inspirational as love of country.

In subduing the temperament of Daniel Morgan.

¹⁷¹Ibid.

¹⁷²Ibid., p. 24.

Brackenridge created a problem in diction that he was only partially successful in solving. Though it has never been recorded that the rough, hardy men of the frontier could accommodate themselves to the strictures of iambic pentameter, this eighteenth-century drama was necessarily cast in that meter. Morgan's cadences fall in the stylized manner, but the content of his speeches does not reflect the plain soldier that Brackenridge sought to portray. Morgan's addresses ring false from the start, calling his new command "gallant souls, and patriots eminent," then changing to "Gentlemen,"¹⁷³ a formal manner of address quite alien to this back-country woodsman. One can, however, accept the standard terms "brave Hendricks" and "gallant Oswald" in speaking to those individuals. The use of the adjectives could perhaps be read as the fighter's appraisal of their conduct. "Countrymen" or the plain "men," a form of address still current in the armed forces when speaking to the troops, would have been far more acceptable for this teamster's vocabulary. The beginning of Morgan's denunciation also shows a lack of understanding of the type of man Morgan really was. Brackenridge should have omitted the mythological allusion to Cyclops and not have the unlearned American draw such a comprehensive parallel from ancient history.¹⁷⁴

In his first speech to the troops, calling for their

¹⁷³Ibid., p. 42.

¹⁷⁴Ibid., p. 52.

direction, Morgan does display that craftiness, couched in plain terms, that allowed him to survive his French and Indian encounters. Stated as it is, direct, plain and weighted to give him the answer he seeks, the speech is consistent with the character Brackenridge assigns him:

Say, shall I draw you off ingloriously,
With speediest step? or shall we yet advance,
And pour revenge on the indignant foe?
Think, Gentlemen, it will be base to leave
The brave Montgomery, who the other wall
By this time storming, will expect our aid,
And rendezvous in the besieged town.¹⁷⁵

His next speech reflects more of the man who was capable of direct action. It only takes him three lines to order Hendricks to bring his company to the fore to kill the British officers on the barrier. This same brevity marks his speech of capitulation as he compresses the impossible position of the Americans and his reasons for surrender to a Christian foe. It is also of note that here he does address his troops as "countrymen."¹⁷⁶ The last of Morgan's speech in which he reviews all creation to find an organism more reprehensible than the perfidious Englishmen is direct, plain, and bespeaks a personal knowledge of the poisonous herbs, toads, spiders, snakes and mad dogs. The images are forceful and familiar to this frontiersman. Just as effective is Morgan's final denunciation from the pit of hell. The Biblical overtones reflect the spirit of the revivalist

¹⁷⁵Ibid., p. 42.

¹⁷⁶Ibid., p. 42, 48.

preachers who found some of their staunchest support in the back woods.

The Chaplain speaks as a man of God, who when challenged by a doubter, gives a dispassioned, logical account of his tenets. He agrees with Oswald that Nature is not disrupted by the Almighty, then builds his case for Divine Assistance in a cool fashion, citing scripture and emphasizing man's dependence on Divine Providence. His argument is chronological, beginning with the days of the flood, and continuing to the present when God has the acts of men and Nature juxtaposed to produce the effect He intends. Throughout, as in a litany he intones, "the Almighty reigns," "guides our every step," "the Almighty reigns" to give each his "lot," ending with the positive assertion that "He reigns, and gives to innocence, its due reward,/ But to the guilty, punishment and death."¹⁷⁷ Although he allies the cause of the Americans with God's, he insists that man cannot bind the Almighty to his own timetable and grant victory upon demand. However, in foretelling of ultimate success, the Chaplain borrows his metaphors from God's own creation to depict victory's birth:

It may be clouded, and deep wrought with woe.
Just so the morning of an April day,
When spring repulses the rude wintry year,
Is buried oft, in the descending rain;
But soon, the warm sun bursts the watry cloud,
Gives chearful noon, and bids the evening mild,
On herbs and flowers, shed only her soft dews.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁷Ibid., pp. 22-23.

¹⁷⁸Ibid., p. 23.

To buttress his arguments, the Chaplain begins his prayer at Montgomery's command with an invocation to the God of all elements, asking Him to dispose the imagination and heart of the King to see the truth of the colonists' cause. He asks for victory if the obdurate King refuses to accept God's grace, stating that the cause coincides with justice and deserves to triumph. In a supreme submission to the Providence of God, the divine invokes the Redeemer's blood, in the Protestant ethic, to beg that the souls of those who will die in the conflict will be cleansed so they may reach their eternal reward. The Chaplain's heaven is far different than the Valhalla pictured by the warrior Montgomery and the vague place of light suggested by Wolfe.

The Chaplain argues most eloquently to bear arms. Here is expressed most emphatically the justice of a cause that sanctions the men of the cloth to bear the sword. God is on the side of the colonists, and His representatives deserve to participate in the contest. In his final appearance he indicates his basic common sense by abandoning lofty, spiritual arguments and urging Burr to leave the insensate bodies of his friends and use his strength to carry on the battle at a more propitious time.

Oswald, the representative of the troops, speaks in rather pedestrian fashion. His speeches are uniformly brief: only two of his eight speeches total thirteen lines, four of them consist of four lines or less, and the two in the discussion with the Chaplain are only eight lines long to allow the

clergyman the opportunity to refute his deistic ideas and substitute a more orthodox one. The four shorter speeches serve to further the action so that other events might take place: he greets Hendricks, announces that the troops are beginning to scale the walls, orders Arnold removed from the field, and shouts that a barrier is taken.

His speech does display knowledge of the holy word, but only to mock the miracles that appear therein.¹⁷⁹ His long plea to surrender lacks the authority of an officer and displays some of the defeatist attitude his arguments with the Chaplain have indicated. He feels that since their valor has been proved and further fighting is useless, they may as well surrender. Thus he functions mainly to inform of events and inspire the rhetoric of those in higher rank. His moving eulogy to Hendricks displays the camaraderie that those who have endured severe trials together feel toward one another.

Oswald's talk is bare of similes, awareness of Nature, and historical or classical allusions. His only references to the deity is to emphasize His noninvolvement in the affairs of men and to scoff at the reward for leading a good life. Although he quotes the Bible, he uses it to his own purposes, allowing the Chaplain to proffer an extended apologia.

Carleton's cunning reveals itself in his addresses to the Americans upon the walls. Slipping at first into his true feelings, he calls them "rebel brood," but to lure them into the walls he gives token acknowledgement of their valor by

¹⁷⁹Ibid., p. 22. Reference to the Assyrian host could have been taken from the Chaplain's own text of the previous Sunday.

changing the address to "stubborn combatants."¹⁸⁰ Only when he has taken them prisoner does he allow his fury full reign. His arguments on the wall bespeak common sense and a promise of proper treatment that carries the full weight of his dual authority. The soldier speaks of their hopeless position; the administrator promises that clemency only the governor can bestow. Both personalities unite in his blandishments in praise of their performance:

But on submission you shall be receiv'd,
With arms of love and pity honouring
Your noble valor eminent and great,
Who these three hours such odds have combated,
And struggled hard with us for victory.¹⁸¹

Carleton's speech in the final act marks the totally depraved villain whose hatred increases the longer he remains in the Americans' presence. Absent are Howe's rationalization of the leaders' "twisted minds" that "wild liberty" has bent. Instead, the governor considers the rebels as innately evil, children of Satan, and no better than the scum of Nature's totality. His opening invectives combine herpetological imagery with appellations indicative of lunacy. In this context, the reference to Don Quixote implies the worst of impractical idealism. That he cannot immediately punish the traitors for fear of American reprisals so inflames the governor that he paints the anticipated torture at the hands of both the

¹⁸⁰Ibid., pp. 46, 47.

¹⁸¹Ibid., p. 47.

British and Indians in the most vivid terms, relying especially on auditory and tactile imagery to evoke the captives' terror:

And use them wantonly, with every pain,
Which flame's, fierce element can exersise.
And with the sound of each loud instrument,
The drum, the horn, in wildest symphony
With your own howlings, shall the scene be grac'd;
Save that in terror, oftentimes, a while
The noise shall cease, and their own cries be heard.¹⁸²

Carleton's response to the Captives strains one's credulity. One can only justify his fiendish relish on sheer propaganda grounds. The governor's final address to the Captives is more in keeping with the soldier administrator who tries to get the men to turn from their rebellious ways. His peroration, citing the tortures of hell as inspiration, provides the basis for Morgan's closing denunciation.

The ghost of General Wolfe speaks in his own right, his phrasings his own and not the echo of Montgomery. Although he repeats some of the themes that motivated the American general, Wolfe's treatment is more direct and quite distinctly his own. His reference to the afterlife is purposely vague with no hint of the particulars with which Montgomery has invested his musings. He is as scornful of the "false council'd King and venal Parliament" as Montgomery had predicted, damning these agents as "Medeas" tearing their helpless children. Unlike Montgomery, Wolfe does not dwell in the past, allotting to the war that brought his death one simple statement, "contention

¹⁸²Ibid., p. 49.

with the rival Gaul." Instead, his interest centers in the present conflict that has taken the lives of so many young. With a nod to Thomas Paine, he regrets that he has helped establish the power of a government that is capable of "framing laws to bind in cases whatsoever." With his newfound knowledge, the shade is able to assert that all events are allowed through the will of God, but in his acceptance he affects nature imagery that has a marked affinity for Montgomery's sensitivities:

Yet must it be, for such the will of God,
Who wraps the dark night in a sable shade,
That thence clear light may spring, and a new morn,
Rise with fresh lustre on the hill and dale.¹⁸³

From a concentration on the present he looks ahead to the future that Britain's own madness has determined and predicts the new nation that will arise. In his role of prophet he covers in broad outlines the relations between the two nations, proclaims the "United States," and mentions that happy balance of states' rights and central authority the new nation will achieve. Truth, commerce, literature, and immortal acts will crown the new nation with glory. The Chaplain predicts victory for the Americans; Wolfe sees far into the future to a time of peace where a full-fledged nation takes its place in the family of nations. His final remark is an answer to Montgomery's plea to his men to drive the British from the

¹⁸³Ibid., p. 39.

continent. The apparition asserts that the general's prayer will be answered in full.¹⁸⁴

Brackenridge was careful to have Wolfe speak in his own character. Although he agrees with Montgomery or the Chaplain, the ghost uses a diction that marks his speeches as distinctively those of the earlier hero. The Revolution has set limits on the perspective of all participants. Wolfe, freed from temporal concerns, looks beyond and in the most accurate of prophecies views the United States as it later came to be.

With the lesser characters, Brackenridge made a conscious attempt to match the speech with the person and his place in the attack. Lamb's four short lines to the Surgeon directing care for enemy wounded are quite consistent with the character presented. The Surgeon responds with a medical man's view of the injuries which furnishes a bit of battle conditions realism in its graphic description.¹⁸⁵ The astonishment of Major Meggs in seeing the vast numbers of the enemy is brief and informative, the speech functioning merely to indicate the tactical position of the enemy. Lamb's response matches Meggs in brevity and information as he calls on his own artillery to continue the fight.¹⁸⁶ Lamb's final speech reveals the essence of the gallant man who refuses to surrender.

¹⁸⁴Ibid., pp. 39-40.

¹⁸⁵Ibid., p. 43.

¹⁸⁶Ibid., p. 45.

Although he submits to the will of heaven in the loss of Montgomery, he will not submit to Carleton and lay down his arms. His moving eulogy to Montgomery far surpasses Burr's clumsy slaverings and matches in poignancy Oswald's lament for Hendricks:

What do I say? can hecatombs of slaves
And villains sacrific'd, repay one drop
Of this pure vital scarlet-streaming blood?
No, not ten thousand of life-gushing veins,
From perjur'd Kings, and venal parasites,
Can rise in value, to one heart-warm drop
Of that pure patriot;¹⁸⁷

Short as they are, the speeches of the Surgeon and Lamb are memorable.

The speech of The Captives deserves commend for its succinct portrayal of the governor's duplicity and the response of the Americans to the intended tortures. Their plea for any torture other than burning and their request to be shot are vivid in depicting the horror the Americans felt at this all too common form of reprisal from Indians. The speech functions to illustrate the conditions under which the Americans lived with hostile Indians as neighbors and further intensifies the villainy of the governor Carleton.

The short, thirteen line speech of Colonel Maclean suits his personality and function. Like Carleton, Maclean regarded the rebels as traitors; therefore his glee at striking down the "great arch-chief of this rebellion" is entirely in

¹⁸⁷Ibid., pp. 46-47.

keeping with his sentiments. By announcing that he intends to cut off the remainder of Arnold's forces, the colonel gives the disposition of both columns and centers attention on Arnold's forces.¹⁸⁸

In developing his characters Brackenridge makes a conscious effort to utilize the correct speech habits and patterns for each person. Thus Montgomery speaks with the wonder of an enthusiastic newcomer in describing his home on the Hudson. Ill at ease with his surroundings, the story of Indian atrocities haunts his thoughts as he ponders the intended horrors of the "savages." His larger view of the political situation causes him to dwell on the tyranny of the government from the King and Parliament through its effects on the colonies. The most seasoned veteran of the Americans, Montgomery meditates on the French and Indian War and the great Wolfe. Arnold provides contrast through his particular knowledge of each Indian tribe, his ease with the militia trained men, and his more pragmatic attempts to motivate them.

Although Cheesman and Macpherson meet a similar fate, the dramatist is careful to accent those traits of their personalities that cast each in his own mold. Cheesman is concerned with the physical appearance of his corpse. Macpherson wants to die like Wolfe, while revenging his father. Through

¹⁸⁸Ibid., pp. 44-45.

the younger Macpherson, the dramatist has the parent speak, thus permitting the voice of maimed veterans to be heard.

Although Brackenridge presents a consistent character at first in the person of Burr, the break-down he experiences at the death scene is reflected in his speech. Especially poor are the eulogies for his fallen comrades, which are almost identical and reveal little of the person's character. The second eulogy for Macpherson should have been omitted entirely. Hendricks, on the other hand, is marked through his speech as the religious, brave, family-loving youth that he is. His pride in his colony and his speech to encourage his men to be first to scale the walls are particularly well articulated.

Morgan, even in the character that Brackenridge has created is not entirely satisfactory. Speaking more as a gentleman than the backwoodsman, Morgan betrays little of his rude origins. Only in his straightforward manner of manipulating the troops to accept his leadership and direction in his speech representative of the forceful, cunning creature that he in fact was. His fiery nature is finally allowed to assert itself in the final denunciation of Carleton, once he has left mythology and history, to revile him in terms of vermin familiar to his environment.

The Chaplain and Oswald use diction appropriate to their person and function in the play. The Chaplain's most successful argument to bear arms is couched in unassailable logic and theology. As the one enlisted man, Brackenridge

purposely keeps Oswald's speech brief, functional, and free from lofty sentiments. For the characterization of minor figures, sufficient aspects of their callings are expressed to characterize Lamb the artillery captain, Meggs the committed fighter, the Surgeon, dedicated and healing, and Colonel Maclean, the British officer dedicated to putting down the traitors in their rebellious schemes.

Carleton's speech reflects the loyal administrator who despises traitors and in judicial review of their crimes passes sentence. However, in delineating the villain, Brackenridge's excesses in portraying Carleton as a fiend relishing the tortures of the captives mar what could have been a forceful portrayal of the adamant foe.

In General Wolfe, Brackenridge presents a voice not an echo. The shade reinforces the thoughts of Montgomery and Burr in his own fashion and goes on to predict with the ring of authority the future of the United States.

The characterization in this play is strengthened by Brackenridge's use of diction appropriate to the character's background, temperament and outlook. Except for Burr, Carleton, and Morgan, the dramatist shows his growth and skill in this vital aspect of the drama.

Brackenridge also manifests an increasing awareness of thematic presentation and a practical knowledge of selection. Convinced that it is noble to die in a just cause, he refrained from constant reiteration of this throughout the play and

implemented the theme through the actions of his characters instead. Thus Montgomery, Cheesman and Macpherson emerge as brave heroes who, in spite of their certain foreknowledge of fatality, continue to serve with dedication until they are killed. For contrast, Captain Hendricks expresses a personal wish to live, but through his actions meets the same fate. Only those fatalities in Montgomery's column converse on the subject. Through the eulogies of the living and General Wolfe the rest of the Americans support this contention. In choosing to portray the three youths who died, the dramatist presents a variety of paragons and broadens the drama's appeal.

Sensing that lofty sentiments of Divine Approbation would be difficult to support in those early, tragic war years, Brackenridge assigns this theme to the most appropriate person, the Chaplain. This divine places the outcome of the battle in the hands of a wise Providence, while predicting ultimate victory for the colonists. General Wolfe's appearance sets the Heavenly seal on this prediction and explains that the colonists must earn their victory through the ultimate sacrifice. Of the living soldiers, only Arnold gives an indirect suggestion that the Deity indeed blesses their endeavors.

That the opposition cannot possibly merit divine sanction is illustrated in the tale of proposed Indian atrocities that Montgomery recounts, Arnold confirms, and Carleton almost succeeds in executing. General Schuyler's letters had provided the basis for the intended human sacrifices. Brackenridge

skillfully integrates the horror at this pact with the action of the drama to demonstrate the national characteristics of the opposing factions.

Within the American ranks Brackenridge found enough of the virtues he extolled to reconcile his dominant theme with the captured colonials. The martyred hero praises the past performances of the second column; Arnold recounts in succinct summary the hardships they have endured. Their actual battle performances overshadow the sluggish attempts of Montgomery's own men. Hendricks himself offers the ultimate sacrifice. Therefore, with the hardened veterans' surrender to the blandishments and threats of the English governor, Brackenridge makes the subtle distinction between sacrifice and slaughter that reconciles captured Americans with his major theme.

The governor's treachery in effecting the surrender and his threats of torture prove as no mere rhetoric can the innate cruelty and oppression of the British government and their representatives. These acts have been foreshadowed in Montgomery's references to tyranny, Burr's comparison to the Egyptian Captivity, and the various derogatory epithets applied by the members of the colonial forces.

Thus in this play Brackenridge illustrates his skill in developing a theme through action and character rather than depending upon constant exposition by the principals. To support his major premise he utilizes a variety of minor themes.

All work together to provide a cohesive structure within which action and character are developed. The drama serves not only as entertainment for a school stage but also as entertainment and inspiration for the dispirited colonists during the disheartening year that saw its publication.

The Death of General Montgomery shows Brackenridge's mastery of the many aspects of the art of the drama. His dramatic sophistication in selecting facts and events for his play exhibits his mature awareness of dramatic potential. His alterations of history to subserve his theme emphasizes this awareness while not seriously impairing historical accuracy. Drawing also upon a rich reserve of rumors and legends that had gained currency in the colonies, the dramatist integrates those which serve his purposes into a work of dramatic intensity aesthetically and polemically pleasing. Except for the scene in which Montgomery is killed, he demonstrates his competence in utilizing the five act structure.

Of greater significance is his ability for characterization. Realizing that Quebec could offer no parallel to Bunkers Hill, the dramatist turned to the person of Richard Montgomery for his concentration and execution of theme. To assist in this, Macpherson and Cheesman are included to give broader coverage to those who died in the battle and emphasize the participation of the younger generation in the movement. Arnold and Hendricks provide suitable contrasts to these

paragons of Montgomery's column. The characters are developed through their dialogue, actions, and interactions with their comrades. Although Burr deteriorates and Carleton's villainy is overdrawn, Brackenridge displays an amazing versatility in developing ten different major characters and portraying individuating traits of four minor ones. In addition, the dramatist effectively uses the devices of the elder Macpherson speaking through his son and the ghost of General Wolfe to provide continuity from the old way of government to a future new structure. The diction, while based on neoclassic meter and style, is for the most part suited to each character, adding another dimension of characterization. Particularly noteworthy are Arnold's contrast in speech to the foreign born Montgomery, Montgomery's special vocatives, the bitter, elder Macpherson, the pedestrian Oswald, and Morgan's final invective. This utterance of Morgan in part redeems the earlier, more cultured speech assigned to him. Carleton's diction also shows a mixture of the appropriate and the overdrawn.

The play is superior to The Battle of Bunkers-Hill in its brisk action, development of character, more authentic diction, and demonstration of theme rather than constant reiteration of lofty sentiments. That Brackenridge intended it only for the reading public in addition to school presentation is most emphatically asserted in his Preface. However, his

inclusion of five footnotes that could not possibly be incorporated validly into the text illustrates the use to which the Presbyterian chaplain wished his dramas put. But in his celebration of a hero of a lost battle, the capable young dramatist kept the drama alive in a nation more concerned with practical realities than aesthetic experiences. In urging the survival of the colonial cause through his school play, Brackenridge contributed to the survival of drama in this turbulent period.

CHAPTER IV

Conclusion

The struggle for American independence which culminated in the Revolutionary War succeeded in establishing the thirteen colonies as a federated republic. While political independence had been gained, American literary dependence on the mother country existed for some years. The conflict did benefit American letters, however, by prompting colonial writers to seek native subjects for their endeavors while at the same time turning their talents to polemic or utilitarian as well as artistic uses. This time produced Thomas Paine and Philip Freneau, the Poet of the Revolution.

Drama as a performing art was severely limited, for on October 20, 1774, the Continental Congress passed the following resolution:

We will, in our several stations, encourage frugality, economy, and industry, and promote agriculture, arts, and the manufactures of this country, especially that of wool; and will discountenance and discourage every species of extravagance and dissipation, especially all horse-racing, and all kinds of gaming, cock-fighting, exhibitions of shews, plays and other expensive divisions and entertainments.¹

¹Journals of the Continental Congress 1774-1789.
Edited from the Original Records in the Library of Congress
by Worthington Chauncey Ford, Chief, Division of Manuscripts
(Washington, 1904), I, 78. Cited by Quinn, p. 32.

Arthur Hobson Quinn notes that this resolution, in spite of the lack of legal force behind it, was generally observed and the American Company departed for the West Indies. Thus he states that the first period of the American drama and theatre was thereby closed.²

Although performed American dramas had to await the outcome of the conflict to continue their development, the dramatic tradition was kept alive during this time by authors such as Mercy Otis Warren who chose topical events as subjects for verse drama which was published anonymously. As early as 1773 The Adulateur,³ a five act dramatic satire which castigated the royal governor Thomas Hutchinson for his ambition, cruelty and treachery, appeared. In the play he is thinly disguised by the name Rapatio, ruler of Upper Servia, which could be indicative of the servile attitude his followers adopted to win royal favors or the servitude in which the citizens have been placed through his despotic rule. To distinguish the patriots, Mrs. Warren uses Roman names: Brutus, Cassius, Junius, and Portius for the colonial leaders James Otis, John Adams, Samuel Adams, and John Hancock; those who fawn on Rapatio, who is redundantly compared to Caesar and Nero, bear the name of their most pejorative trait, e.g., Dupe-Thomas Flucker, Meagre-Foster Hutchinson, and Justice Hazlerod-Peter Oliver.⁴

²Quinn, p. 32.

³[Mercy Otis Warren] The Adulateur (Boston, 1773).

⁴Quinn supplies the identification, pp. 35, 40.

In the first act, the patriots bemoan their losses of rights and the apathy of the populace. Rapatio, smarting from former ill treatment, vows revenge by further trampling down their choicest rights. The ruler, secure in his armed troops, vows that he will bring the people to further ruin in order to subjugate them. The second act reveals the horror of the patriots at the murder of a young boy by one of Rapatio's soldiers. Brutus sounds the keynote of resistance, "a cool, sedate and yet determined spirit" of action governed by "a sense of honor."⁵ After Rapatio gives his soldiers carte blanche to keep order, the patriots reassemble to discuss the effects of this order, the wanton killing of civilians. Brutus sees a ghost crying for revenge, and the act closes as Brutus and an angered citizenry call for the revenge of the slaughtered innocents.

The play moves on as the concerned citizens meet with the patriots to plan their course of action. As a ghost "with naked breast exposing his wounds enters."⁶ Cassius raises the indignation to a fever pitch with his impassioned speech for revenge, and the council sends an ultimatum to Rapatio: a date must be set for the departure of the soldiers or "the sun will set in blood."⁷ Rapatio's advisors tell him that

⁵Warren, p. 12.

⁶Ibid., p. 20.

⁷Ibid.

the soldiers' action has been excessive and that the sponsors of the demand are honorable but determined men. Meeting with Brutus, Rapatio announces that the demands will be met. Secretly, however, he plans to free the soldiers who fired the shots by announcing that a conspiracy of citizens had planned to attack the soldiers which forced them to shoot.

In the fourth act the ruler consolidates his position by instructing Justice Hazlerod to free government men. As the play closes, the slayers of the citizens are promised freedom, and Brutus now aware of the treachery of Rapatio, bemoans his country's fate. But in a note of prophecy, Brutus predicts that although the country will run with blood, it will arise revived and free to serve as a haven for oppressed men of other nations.

The unifying factor of this drama is the character of Rapatio, whose ambition causes the incidents to which the people react. After the two expository acts, the satire on the ruling classes begins. P_____p. for example, confesses that, "I've sacrificed honor, been a tool/ Cringed, bowed and fawned."⁸ The rest of the play continues the satire on the ruler and the men who surround him, pointing out through their

⁸Ibid., p. 25.

own admissions their culpability, unworthiness, or evil intent.

There is little attempt at characterization beyond the identifying pseudonyms for the unworthy band. The conglomerate of patriots have little to distinguish themselves. Cassius is haunted by his freeborn ancestors, Junius proclaims his old age, and Brutus advises restraint. Not until Brutus is summoned by Rapatio is his role of hero confirmed. The diction alternates between the ponderously trite moralizing of Brutus, "Man is a light tennis ball of fortune,"⁹ to the merely trite, "justice drops her scales."¹⁰ Just as all patriots vie to express the most lofty sentiments of honor and valor, so too do their opposite numbers mouth lofty praise of their Nero-like leader. Although Rapatio's military supported enforcement of power over free men provides the rationale for his acts, the patriots' response to them is motivated by recurring cries of "Revenge" rather than restoration of freedom.

Mrs. Warren anonymously published a second political satire, *The Group*, in 1775,¹¹ which is a verse drama directed for the most part against the members of the Loyalist party in Massachusetts who had accepted appointment by the King to

⁹Ibid., p. 14.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 5.

¹¹[Mercy Otis Warren], The Group (Boston, 1775).

a council in the upper house of Massachusetts once the charter of the colony had been abrogated. For this drama a clef the key to the Dramatis Personae and an exhaustive knowledge of the socio-political structure are essential to any understanding.¹² Perhaps because she dealt with people better known to her, Mrs. Warren presents more individuating characteristics and a greater variety of characters than in her first effort.

In the first act, which consists of one scene, Justice Hazlerod converses with some of the appointed councilors. All are for various reasons committed to the Loyalist cause, but Hateall surpasses them in despising the opposition. The two convince the weaker members that the iron rule established by the departed Rapatio will protect them.

Act two continues with the group, its members swelled by more councilors, continuing their revelations of their derision of their countrymen, their motivations in joining the Tories, their hopes for profit through their countrymen's sufferings, and their wonder at the intensity of rebel resistance. They are united in their private castigation of Rapatio whose blandishments have led them to their present political position. A short scene reveals the deep-seated fear of two Councilors at the armed resistance of the populace. Harried

¹²Quinn, pp. 40-41, provides what he considers the correct key and gives his method of determination from the sources available.

by thoughts of their own danger, the two move to join the rest of the group in Sylla's (Gage's) camp whence they have been summoned.

The play closes at this site where the members quaver before the military commander and beg his protection from the armed rebels. Sylla hesitates to quarter his troops in Tory homes because he is concerned for the reputation and virtue of the women living in them. This compassion for the civilians extends itself to the rebel cause and furnishes tension as his sense of the colonists' rights clashes with his intense loyalty to his sovereign. Grieving that he may have to enforce servitude through the use of his troops, Sylla leaves the group. These men acknowledge that though the colonists have suffered oppression, they themselves find it more rewarding to cast their lots against their brothers on the powerful side of the King.

Although the play is more a series of conversation than a drama, Mrs. Warren exhibits a dramatic awareness in her settings which prompt the discussions and her wider range of people who have enlisted in the Tory cause for a variety of motives. It is these differences that furnish the characters with varying degrees of villainy and cowardice. These characters are more finely drawn, showing through their interchanges their circumstances, background, and reasoning which have led them to the Tory camp. Especially noteworthy is the presentation of Sylla whose warring emotions furnish the only conflict in the play. The diction is the same

inflated style for each. One common theme united the group, their hostility and fear of the colonists who by their resistance threaten the group's security.

For the people of Revolutionary times, the subjects of Mrs. Warren's dramas were too topical to have more than regional appeal. A thorough knowledge of government satellites as well as the luminaries was essential to grasp the meaning and appreciate the satire of The Adulateur. In addition to this background, one had to be fully versed on the colonials who formed the Mandamus Council to understand and appreciate the many references satired in The Group. Today the plays cannot be read until this historical matter has been mastered.

One dramatic publication that had appeal even for those not politically aware appeared in print the year after The Group. The Blockheads; or the Affrighted Officers¹³ is a five act prose farce written as a rebuttal to General Burgoyne's farce, The Blockade, which ridiculed the patriot army then blockading the city. The play was performed in the winter of 1775-76 in Boston but was not published.¹⁴ Although the American farce has been attributed to Mrs. Warren,¹⁵

¹³Anon., The Blockheads; or the Affrighted Officers (Boston, 1776).

¹⁴Quinn, p. 46.

¹⁵Tyler, p. 207.

Arthur Hobson Quinn offers some convincing arguments, based primarily on the coarseness of the language, against this theory.¹⁶

The play opens as the British discover Washington's army entrenched on Dorchester Heights ready to destroy British shipping and capture Boston. General Howe's plan to dislodge them from the heights is aborted as the winds drive back the attacking party under Lord Percy. Faced with this opposition, the British army leaves Boston, taking with them the American Tory supporters.

The play is a coarse satire consisting mainly of conversations between British officers and Tory refugees, both groups lamenting their starvation in Boston at the hands of a besieging army. The characters show little differentiation, and the diction, though vigorous, is coarse. Two main themes emerge, the cowardice of the British forces and the dismay of the American Loyalists at finding their protectors forced to flee.

As in Mrs. Warren's efforts, a key to the characters is required for understanding of the finer points.¹⁷ However, one can grasp the broader outlines of the play in terms of the colonial versus British conflict and appreciate the sorry

¹⁶Quinn, pp. 46-47.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 47, provides a key from the one written in the copy in the Clothier Collection of the University of Pennsylvania.

spectacle of the fleeing invincible army and discomfiture of the turn-coat American Loyalists.

That same year saw the publication of another, more broadly based drama, The Fall of British Tyranny, attributed to John or Joseph Leacock.¹⁸ This five act, prose drama has been characterized by Tyler as "roughly described as an American Chronicle Play"¹⁹ and by Quinn as a drama through whose scope it "aspires to the dignity of a chronicle play."²⁰ With its shifts in scenes from England to Massachusetts to the Virginia seacoast to Massachusetts to Canada and finally ending in Massachusetts, the play actually chronicles both the events precipitating the Revolution and the first of the armed conflicts. The premise of the play rests on the contention that the Revolution was effected by a clever plot of Lord Bute in order to precipitate a crisis in England. A discredited George III would then be forced to abdicate in favor of Bute's Stuart kinsman through whom Lord Bute would actually rule.

The Dramatis Personae furnishes the key for the English characters whose stage names generally indicate their chief vice or virtue, e.g., Lord Paramount-Mr. Bute, Lord Mocklaw-Mr. Mansfield, Judas-Mr. Hutchison, and Bold Irishman-Mr. Burke. Generals Washington, Lee and Putnam appear as themselves. Although Montrose Moses claims that this is the

¹⁸ John Leacock(?), The Fall of British Tyranny, or American Liberty Triumphant (Philadelphia, 1776).

¹⁹ Tyler, pp. 198-99.

²⁰ Quinn, p. 48.

first literary piece in which Washington appears as a character,²¹ his research raises some question. The text of Mrs. Warren's The Group in his anthology of early American dramatists is taken from a Philadelphia reprint of a Jamaica edition; scenes two and three of the second act are missing. Quinn in his survey of the field is more cautious, admitting that this seems to be the first such appearance of the general.²²

The play opens at some time prior to the passage of the Intolerable Acts. In fast paced dialogue through a series of scenes, Lord Paramount (Bute) reveals his plan to foment trouble in the colonies and enlists the help of his confederates in its execution. Governor Hutchison as Judas is present when the troops are ordered to Boston, the port is ordered sealed, charters are revoked, and trade virtually paralyzed. In the second act the friends of the colonies are unsuccessful in stopping these harsh measures. Burke and Wilkes as Bold Irishman and Lord Patriot lament the turn of events and agree that after an initial setback, the colonies will arise victorious.

The third act shifts to America where in another quick series of scenes the logical results of Paramount's policies determine the course of events. The citizenry of Boston,

²¹Montrose J. Moses (ed.), Representative Plays by American Dramatists 1765-1819 (New York, 1918), p. 281.

²²Quinn, p. 49.

angered at the closing of the port, call the First Continental Congress, a minister announces the loss of the charter and property confiscation, and a Whig and Tory through their conversation state their ideological convictions as Gage as Lord Boston arrives with troops to fortify the city. The two succeeding brief scenes show the disintegration of Lord Boston's confidence in his position as word arrives of the rout of his regulars at Lexington. He moves to the heights to witness his invincible British host in inglorious retreat. Comic relief is provided next by two shepherds who describe the scene from the American viewpoint. The Battle of Lexington is cast in bucolic terms of innocent sheep who, finding themselves encircled by ravenous wolves, turn to their shepherds to put the pack to rout. Politics means nothing to these rustics who are not even sure of the ruler's name. There follows a song of twenty-one quatrains which lampoons British lords and the King, referred to as St. George. The act closes on a tragic note, however, as Clarissa grieves over the loss of her husband, son, and brother on Bunkers-Hill. In a vivid, eyewitness account, a neighbor describes the two routs of the British and praises Warren for her heroic effort.

The first part of the fourth act reveals the activities of the British off the Virginia coast. Lord Kidnap, when he is not occupied with his many mistresses or with his lascivious chaplain in a drinking bout, directs the recruitment or abduction of Negro slaves for training as British fighting

units to wipe out their former masters. Several black men row out to the ship where, although despised as men, they are armed and trained. A council of war in Boston after Bunkers-Hill closes the act. The British generals and staff are amazed and terrified by the unexpected military capacity of the rebels. Only Howe as Elbow Room voices any admiration for the valor of the colonists. The scene closes as the British admit that provisions are few and that sheep stealing which had so far only supplemented their diet may prove to be their only source of supply.

The play closes showing American heroism and optimism in spite of reverses. In Montreal Ethan Allen, captured but undaunted, alternately curses and forgives his captors. At Cambridge, Washington, meeting with Lee and Putnam, rejoices in the news of Benedict Arnold's and Montgomery's successes when the tragic news of Montgomery's death reaches them. The men take some consolation in the American troops which still besiege Quebec. The final scene ends on a determinedly optimistic note. Washington and Lee renew their vows of devotion to the American cause by swearing not to sheathe their swords until they either die or gain freedom. Putnam, vowing revenge for Montgomery's death, joins them.

Although the play presents a variety of characters and actions, the plot of Paramount and its results act as the unifying factor. The selection of historic highlights to be dramatized shows the author's awareness of dramatic potential.

The sensitive treatment of the friends of America in Parliament and the exposition of American Whig and Tory views give the play a balance in portraying the people on both sides of the Atlantic.

Elements of satire are present in Leacock's treatment of Bute and his henchmen, the attitude of the British soldiers guarding a terrorized Gage, and the type of personnel who run his majesty's black recruiting operation. An assortment of characters peoples the drama's panoramic sweep of scenes extending from the prerevolutionary times to the first armed conflicts of the war, ranging from slaves, shepherds, a minister, a Whig, and a bereaved widow to the high command on the American side and from sailors, soldiers, peers and generals on the British side. The minor characters are sufficiently delineated to represent the vocation or type intended. The major figures are quite well individuated through development of their major traits, Washington's leadership, Mocklaw's astute machinations, Gage's braggadocio turning to fright, and Burke's genuine concern for justice to the colonies.

Diction appropriate to the speaker is one of the most noteworthy achievements in the drama. The British tars converse in vigorous, vulgar language; the shepherds use rustic similes and analogies to describe events; the ordinary citizens of Boston use plain language; the peers' speech reveals background and breeding. In the British high command the salty talk of crusty Admiral Tombstone distinguishes him

from his stodgy, land-based counterparts. General Putnam's attitude and plainer speeches set him apart from his contemporaries. Most striking is Leacock's realistic portrayal of the Southern Negro dialect and speech patterns:

Cudjo: Eas, massa Lord, eb'ry one, me too.²³

Covering so many events of the revolutionary period and encompassing the broad spectrum of colonial classes, The Fall of British Tyranny had a wide appeal to the people of the colonies. Today, while some of the figures may not be familiar to the ordinary reader, the play can be appreciated and enjoyed because of its theme of a freedom-loving people fighting to protect themselves from unscrupulous men which is executed with skill and appeal.

One dramatist who viewed the conflict with the usual alarm but with unusual moderation is Colonel Robert Munford Jones, whose two dramatic pieces, The Candidates and The Patriots were published with his other works by his son in 1798.²⁴ The Candidates, a three act prose drama which examines the political structure and electorate of the author's home Virginia county around 1770, is severely restricted in appeal because of its subject. However, The Patriots deals with the excesses of fanaticism, no matter how worthy the cause. Quinn

²³Leacock, p. 49.

²⁴Colonel Robert Munford, A Collection of Plays and Poems by the late Colonel Robert Munford, of Macklenburg, County, in the State of Virginia. Edited by William Munford (Petersburg, Va., 1798).

claims for this play a Philadelphia publication in 1776.²⁵ However, a more recent work on Munford offers some convincing arguments from internal evidence that the play could not have been written until 1777. A very plausible theory is also advanced to account for, as the author terms it, "the ghost edition."²⁶ However, it is beyond the scope of this dissertation to pass on the merits of these arguments. But since the play deals with a topic relevant to the Revolution and could have been circulated in manuscript form, it deserves at least a brief notice in this survey of dramatists and their subjects.

This five act prose satire holds up to ridicule those violent, self-proclaimed patriots who during any crisis always insist that the sole tests of civic virtue are noisy protestations of loyalty and rigid conformity in thought and act to mob standards. The true patriots are two men whose questioning of loyalty oaths, persecution of minorities, and the activities of the extra-legal Committee of Observation has branded them as Tories. Trueman and Meanwell are further denounced by Tackabout who at the end of the play is unmasked as the real Tory. The characters are drawn with bold strokes to embody the virtue or vice their names identify. The diction varies in intensity of fervor to suit the degree of fanaticism

²⁵Quinn, p. 54.

²⁶Rodney M. Baine, Robert Munford, America's First Comic Dramatist (Athens, Ga., 1967), p. 73; pp. 97-108.

by the character.

Munford's treatment of the subject includes elements of farce in the case of minor, oafish characters whose actions as well as attitudes exploit their rabid views. Tackabout is booted from the courthouse by the Committee who had praised his patriotism, and Isabella, one of the first female militants, is resolved not to love a man whose patriotism does not measure up to hers. The proceedings of the Committee as they try to outshout one another in declaring their own intense loyalty perhaps provide the best example.

Munford reserves his sharpest, formal satire for those in positions of power who make their countrymen suffer because their protestations of allegiance do not match in volume their own, self-proclaimed loyalty. Trueman's defense before the Committee of Observation provides a good example:

If suspicion makes me a tory, I may be one; if a disapprobation of man and measures constitutes a tory, I am one; but if a real attachment to the true interests of my country stamps me her friend, then I detest the approbrious epithet of tory, as much as I do the inflammatory distinction of "whig."²⁷

Had Munford's play been published or circulated, the plea for moderation may have limited its appreciation at a time when the outcome of the Revolution was so shadowed with

²⁷Colonel Robert Munford, The Patriots in A Collection of Plays and Poems, p. 35.

doubt, making a modest expression of zeal tantamount to an act of disloyalty in itself. However, viewed objectively, this drama is a skillful satire of patriotic excesses which for all its humorous touches remains a serious and though provoking study of men whose zeal overcomes reason in a just cause.

Dramatists during the revolutionary period turned to events and attitudes for subject matter. Treatment ranged from the formal satire of Mrs. Warren in her two offerings to the broad coarse farce of the anonymous The Blockheads. Leacock's offering encompassed a broad range of historical events in his chronicle, touching in his many scenes the attitudes of British peers, friends of America in England, American Whigs and American Tories, and the upper and lower echelons of the British forces. Munford, again using satire, emphasized using moderation in assuming any political posture. Because the subject matter was so topical, most of these plays today have little appeal. Even Leacock's The Fall of British Tyranny requires a thorough indoctrination in both American and British history for a full appreciation.

In taking the historic approach and dramatizing two events of the Revolution, Hugh Henry Brackenridge fashioned two excellent plays that wear well with time. By concentrating on the moral achievement of The Battle of Bunkers-Hill and the martyrdom of General Richard Montgomery in The Death of General Montgomery, Brackenridge created patriotic dramas

of artistic merit as well as poelmic worth. His plays were of universal appeal because they fell within the ken of a united, fighting, colonial America.

The resolution passed by the Congress undoubtedly pleased his Knox-oriented, Dr. Witherspoon-confirmed attitude that plays could only be staged to give practice in oratory, never for entertainment. People of quality and taste, of course, should have access to published drama for their own private instruction and edification. By publishing his plays, first presented by his pupils at Somerset Academy, Brackenridge not only found an outlet for his creative talents, but helped keep alive the dramatic form while aiding the cause of independence.

The development of Brackenridge's dramatic potential can be traced from his college days when in 1771 he presented a trialogue at the College of New Jersey (Princeton) commencement, The Rising Glory of America, a poem co-authored with Philip Freneau. Working within the relatively loose structure of this commencement ode, Brackenridge presents the stately prologue containing the thematic statement developed throughout the tripart structure of past, present, and future. It is his epilogue that compresses the hopes and visions of the participants in a triumphant assertion of the future glory of America. Although Brackenridge's contribution to the major part of the ode is flawed by his digressions on North American Indian atrocities, his development of the commerce,

agriculture, and literature sub-themes are emphatic assertions of the potential greatness that will become America's glory. In the prophecies written by Brackenridge the poem displays the most specific foretellings that enunciate the most stimulating visions of the piece. Brackenridge's potential for characterization reveals itself in his defining of three totally different personalities. Leander dominates the discussion, at times redirecting the speakers to develop the themes of his prologue; Acasto progresses from mere respondent in the earlier sections to eulogist and visionary from whom the others take their cue in foretelling. Eugenio's character lacks those individuating traits that define a person for the most part. However, the lines authored by Brackenridge follow faithfully the development of the themes indicated. Although all three characters use the same diction, Brackenridge provides most of the speeches of transition, pointing the way to his capacity for later stage dialogue.

Brackenridge's second commencement offering, A Poem on Divine Revelation, 1774, develops the arguments of conservative colonials to whom acts of defiance and destruction were particularly abhorrent. Although lacking characters and dramatic structure, the poem displays Brackenridge's concern for reasoned persuasion to a religiously oriented point of view, a concern that was to culminate in his thematic reiteration of the Divine Assistance motif of his first drama.

In 1776 Brackenridge utilized these persuasive talents

in the cause of American independence by fashioning a play celebrating the united colonial strength that made Bunkers Hill inspirational as well as militarily memorable. Adapting to the tighter control of the five act dramatic structure, Brackenridge emphasizes theme and action in a judicious balance of rhetoric and parallel scenes, presenting the many facets of the struggle both historic and personal. The contrasts of ideologies of tyranny and freedom, the moral superiority of the dedicated Americans and the diffident attitudes of the British leaders reflected in the cowardice of their troops demonstrates the author's growing skill in sustaining tension. Although characterization is not the dramatist's prime concern, his selection of personalities to depict shows an awareness of dramatic possibilities and his choice of traits to emphasize sufficiently distinguishes and sets each member of the cast in his own identity. Although Burgoyne lacks one redeeming quality and Gardiner emerges defined only in his last scenes, it is my opinion that the representation for the others offsets this deficiency. Brackenridge's utilization of certain devices in diction further reinforces his characterizations and themes. Thus the British invocation of pagan deities, taking of oaths, and superstitious dread of the colonial sustaining power underscore the justice of the American cause which God manifestly supports. The noble Warren expresses lofty ideals while the tactical considerations of Howe and Putnam distinguish the plainer speaking soldiers.

Burgoyne and Gage's different facets of villainy reveal themselves through their expressed views of the conflict.

In his presentation of a fight on a Massachusetts hillside, Brackenridge extends the incredible feats of the local militias to the credit of the American forces. The battle assumes national significance, canonizing the first American martyr and rallying support for the cause of American freedom. Brackenridge's selection of incidents to be dramatized, his parallel scenes, characterization reinforced by appropriate diction reveal his emerging skill as a dramatist.

Just as Bunkers Hill had provided the colonial cause with confirmation of the united American fighting spirit and power, the ill-fated Canadian campaign added another worthy martyr to the lists of American heroes. General Richard Montgomery was a liberal gentleman and soldier whose transatlantic experiences invested his rejection of the government of Britain with an added dimension of revulsion. His death while attempting to drive the oppressors from the shores of his adopted home epitomized his dedication to the cause of freedom. Hugh Henry Brackenridge's dramatic instinct led him to honor this early Revolutionary hero by dramatizing his end in The Death of General Montgomery in 1777.

In this play Brackenridge illustrates his skill in developing a theme through character supported by action.

Not only does Montgomery evolve through a series of beneficial actions and reverses, but his second in command, Colonel Benedict Arnold, grows from his subordinate position to a leader in his own right. Clustered around each column head is a variety of minor figures whose lives and actions demonstrate different aspects of colonial fighting spirit. Further defining his diverse personalities, Brackenridge employs appropriate diction to mark ten major figures. Although, as in the earlier play, the dramatist is unable to endow his villain, Governor Carleton, with any redeeming features, the evolution of the character from petty tyrant to complete fiend is worth noting for its accelerated progression through two brief scenes.

Since the disaster at Quebec did not lend itself to the effective devices of parallel scenes, the dramatist structured his play to demonstrate the honor of dying for one's country and the futility of senseless sacrifice. Drawing from the abundance of rumors and "legends" current in the colonies, as well as historical fact, Brackenridge fashioned a patriotic drama which displays the dramatist's increased sophistication in the dramatic art. The play is superior to his earlier effort in its brisk action, characterization, authentic diction, and demonstration of theme rather than reiteration of lofty sentiments.

One chapter of the history of the infant American drama closed with the move toward American independence in 1774. However, closet dramas provided the logical vehicle for

continuing the dramatic tradition. It is essential to include these publications in any consideration of American drama because they are representative of the spirit of the times and help to give a more comprehensive view of the subjects which were treated in dramatic form by the early American playwrights. By investing his dramas with the contemporary relevance of current themes and national heroes, Brackenridge contributed to the survival of drama in this period. By selecting episodes with dramatic potential, welding them into cohesive structures within which characters and action developed, he produced plays of artistic merit that place him as one of the more capable dramatic writers during this difficult period.

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The dissertation submitted by Virginia A. Hajek has been read and approved by members of the Department of English.

The final copies have been examined by the director of the dissertation and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the dissertation is now given final approval with reference to content and form.

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